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Table of exchange rates for various countries including Albania, Australia, Austria, etc.

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 48,468

End of the peer show New Labour Establishment: Day 2

Anger over schools failure

Shephard 'panic' over tests at 11

John Carvel Education Editor

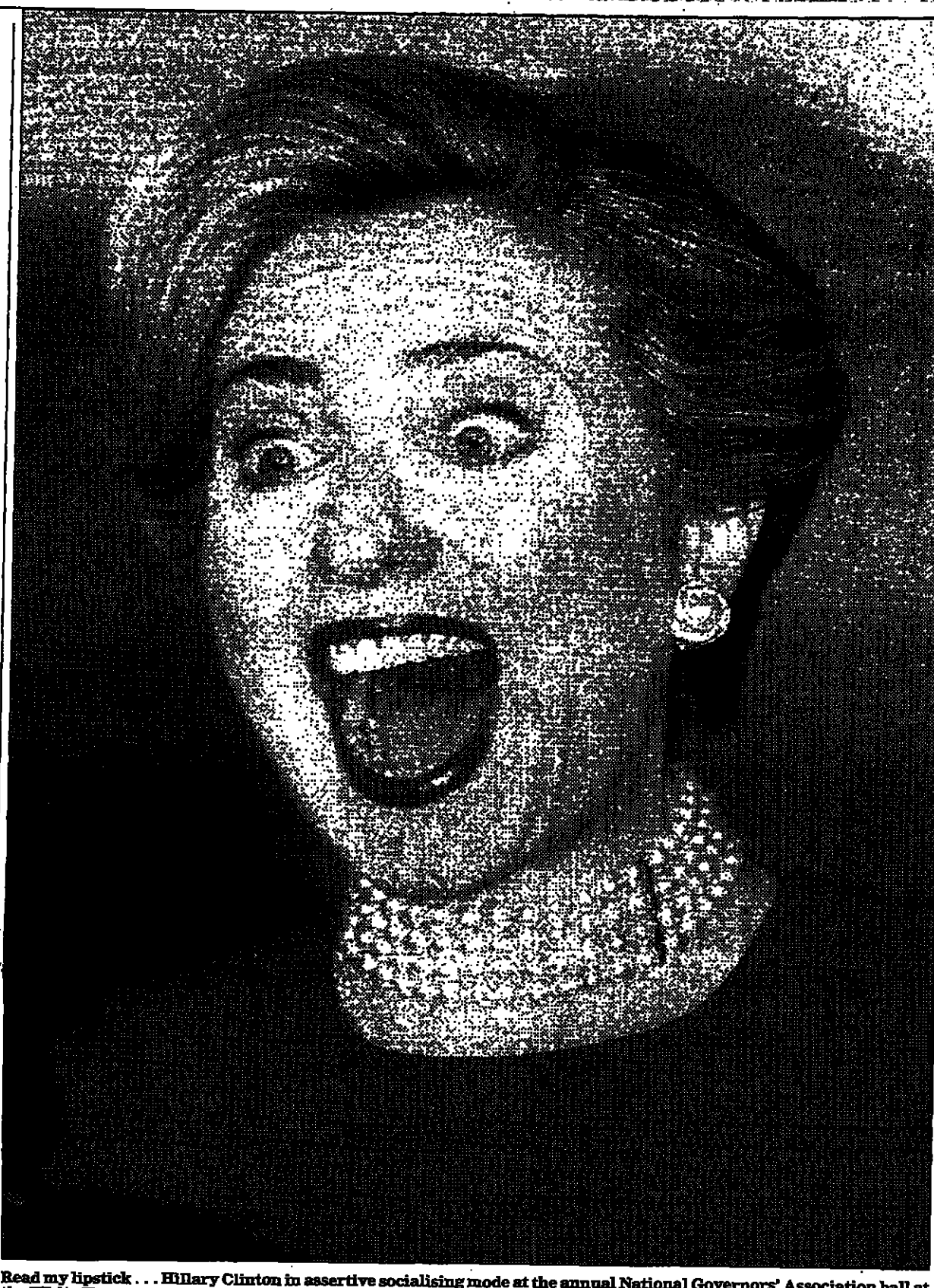
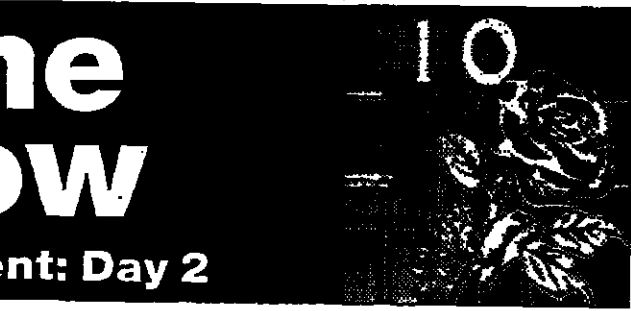
GILLIAN Shephard was last night accused of panicking in the face of fresh evidence from the Office for Standards in Education...

School report

- 1996 Ofsted report reveals: One in three lessons for 8 to 11 year olds unsatisfactory. One in five lessons for 11 to 14 year olds unsatisfactory.

Two weeks ago results of the first national tests of 11-year-olds showed more than half failed to reach the expected standard in English and maths.

slowly after the age of seven, due to a fall in the quality of teaching. This persisted in the early years of secondary school when pupils were taught by the least-qualified teachers.



Read my lipstick... Hillary Clinton in assertive socialising mode at the annual National Governors' Association ball at the White House

Soldier's hand of friendship eases Bosnian child's painful burden

Julian Berger in Sarajevo reports on a British sergeant's personal mercy mission

WHEN Sergeant-Major Vito Ferguson stroled into the hospital ward, Hurmija Mujic was sitting up in bed looking straight ahead, her face deadened with a numbing combination of grief, loss and boredom.

Srebrenica - but she has good reason to envy the dead. Since a small piece of shrapnel from a Serb shell plunged into her spine in October 1994, she has been paralysed from the waist down.

Cold weather set to last as snow blankets most of Britain

Alex Belles The London Weather Centre said the bitterly cold weather was moving slowly eastwards and would cover the country by this morning.

closed. Most motorways in Strathclyde were down to one lane. Thousands of school children in Scotland, Wales and the Lake District were sent home because their schools were shut, and hundreds of workers at the Sellafield nuclear complex in Cumbria had to spend last night at work because they were snowed in.

The smut of Gary Bushell

Child bride in Turkey 'six weeks pregnant'

SARAH COOK, the 13-year-old Essex schoolgirl who went through an Islamic marriage ceremony in Turkey, was reported by Turkish television last night to be six weeks pregnant.

WALK THE PROPOSED NEWBURY BYPASS ON SUNDAY 11TH FEBRUARY

...and see for yourself the destruction that will be wrought upon some of Britain's most splendid woodlands, heath and water meadow if this wanton desecration of our countryside is allowed to proceed.

Inside

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GREENPEACE logo and text: CUT TRAFFIC NOT TREES



Sketch

In the dark, and possibly mad



Simon Hoggart

TO WORK for the first time on a spanking new privatised train. Actually it looked remarkably like an old British Rail train, in the same colours, with the same staff and the same surly youths with their boots up on the seats. It was even 12 minutes late. These days nostalgia is just another source of instant gratification. Still, I was lucky. On the same line the previous day I would have travelled in with the Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, and Mr Toby Jessel who, falling a row, will shortly be my MP. The two men had risen at 4.30am to ride on the first privatised train. "You must be mad," someone shouted at Mr Jessel in the Commons yesterday. "Perhaps I am mad," he agreed, and a few of his colleagues could be seen nodding, almost imperceptibly. The train was clean and punctual, so my constituents can now look forward to an improved service! (Of course, with VIPs on board, they'd be bothered to clean it and make it on time.) "It was a particular pleasure to meet my hon friend at 5.10 o'clock on Twickenham station," Sir George replied, straining credulity further than most would dare. "He was able to point out certain interesting features on our way to Waters." You can't see a lot at 5.15 on a February morning, since it is pitch dark. Perhaps Mr Jessel pointed to where local landmarks would be visible two hours later. "That's Old-Bins, Secretary of State, that's Look-In-Side-Rental, and, ah yes, Mr Frisby the Butcher. His loin chops are rather famous around here!" "Fascinating, Toby, quite fascinating," Sir George would murmur in his courtly way, wondering vaguely if there was a restaurant car he could escape to. He was answering a question about the

fiddles on the privatised TLS line. Labour MPs seemed outraged, although I don't see why they should be surprised. A certain gamy whiff of sleaze is helpful for getting preferment from this government. Perhaps it was in their bid, couched in modern corporate jargon: "We propose to construct an aggressive ongoing reciprocal program of creative unilateral revenue enhancement." Nigel Spearing said he had asked the new company to stop trains at West Ham, on the laughable grounds that passengers could change to two trains and another railway. "They refused, claiming they would lose revenue from there to Fenchurch Street," he said. Not stopping trains because passengers would only get off perhaps the company is running the East Coast line will enhance their revenue by cutting out York so that everyone has to go to Edinburgh. National Heritage Questions were largely devoted to "Where's her off-button, eh?" as she piped onward. "Yes," she would say, often, "the opposite side say one thing... and they all joined in... do another?" Years ago upper class ladies ventured into the slums to perhaps the poor about the evils of gambling. Nowadays Mrs Bottomley tells them of the innumerable benefits of gambling, but the jeering from the urchins and guttersnipes is just as loud. She bore up well, despite the fact that she had "urban forests" (what?) and once when she completely forgot to answer a question. Later, Edwina Currie received the first anti-plug for her novel. Tony Banks complained on a point of order that the book implied MPs spent their time "drinking themselves to oblivion and bonking their eyeballs out. Unfortunately this is not the case." Betty slapped him firmly down. "There is an answer to that. Don't buy it, and don't read it." There's a quote which would look well on the cover of the paperback.

First night

Cruelly, madly, deeply disturbing

Robin Thumber

THE WASP FACTORY Barrow-in-Furness/Touring ONE WAY to adapt a novel for the stage, as Ken Campbell once said, is to get your secretary to type out all the bits in quotation marks. The other way is to deconstruct the ideas in the book and reinterpret them. That's what director Richard Gregory has done with Philip Larkin's first, cult novel, a tongue-in-cheek exercise in the comedy of cruelty which examines just how nasty you can get and still come out smiling. Banks's book is apparently about a disturbed 16-year-old—a solitary, obsessive fetishist with a macabre, sadistic sense of humour, the sort of person who takes butterflies apart to see how they work and kills children for fun by flying them on a kite. He'd probably now be diagnosed as autistic or psychotic—but it's Frank's brother, Eric, who's a certified nutter and his loopy, hippy father who seems relatively sane. It's a Catcher in the Rye for the me generation. Gregory's 75-minute straight-through production, for a Northern Stage tour of the north, was defiantly premiered this weekend at Forum 28 in Barrow-in-Furness, where it is followed by a more predictable amateur

cular sandpit suggesting the book's killing dunes, and a vertical ladder suggesting all sorts of weird theosophies. Richard Clewes, as the father, is shaven-headed and sinisterly robed like a medieval cleric. Jane Arnfield splits Frank's personality with Matthew Dunsier, who also plays Eric, in black casuals. It's not a conventional, naturalistic replay of the book. Gregory uses the text like musical themes and his performers like instruments. He uses puppets and music, movement and light. The dance sequences, with the tortured, jerky, self-mutilating movements of the deeply troubled, spill into the gestures and body language of the spoken text: the arrogant anguish of the ladder-walk spills into the breathtaking gymnastics of the circus. You're left with a sense of alienation and dissociation so complete that it literally takes you away—here is Philip Larkin's "They fuck you up, your mum and dad" made flesh. You're not even sure, because of the casting, whether Frank and Eric are two people or one. What is certain is that casual killing, on a caprice, is not just revenge for parental detachment but an almost valid response to being born into an absurd world, a frivolous fault in a venal universe. The Wasp Factory rattles your foundations as it challenges your preconceptions of an eve-

Survey shows two in three MPs support BBC battle over sport

Patrick Wintour TWO out of three MPs back regulations to prevent Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB from gaining exclusive access to flagstaff sporting events, a survey revealed yesterday. The survey, commissioned by the BBC from MORI, was released on the eve of today's House of Lords vote on amendments tabled by a cross-party alliance of peers which would guarantee the BBC and ITV access to Britain's sporting "crown jewels". The Government, which

favours allowing sporting bodies to determine the market rate for their events, faces defeat over the issue. The poll shows 69 per cent of MPs support regulation of major sports events with 23 per cent opposed. Conservative MPs back regulation by 48 per cent to 37 per cent. Senior Tories including Kenneth Baker, the former home secretary, Robert Atkins, the former sports minister, David Mellor, the former heritage secretary, and Sebastian Coe, the athlete and MP for Falmouth, have expressed their concern at the Broadcasting Bill.

Publishers fight curb on 'explicit sex' in teenagers' magazines

Sally Weale

PUBLISHERS in the lucrative girls' magazine market are resisting attempts to clamp down on explicit sex in publications read by young teenagers. A Bill is to be introduced in the House of Commons today in response to claims of growing concern among parents that magazines read by children as young as 10 and 11 contain too much sex. The furor was triggered last November by the problem page of the magazine TV Hits which explained to readers—some as young as 11, though the average age is 14—how to perform oral sex. The Periodical (Protection of Children) Bill, sponsored by Tory MP Peter Luff (Worcester) under the 10-minute rule procedure, would require publishers to print the recommended minimum readership age on the magazine's cover or face a fine. The Publishers Association (PA) said teenage magazines were aware of their responsibilities and warned of practical difficulties in implementing the measure. PPA chief executive Ian Locks said: "If implemented it would have to cover newspapers, which are read by children and frequently contain magazines for children, and presumably books as well. "By and large these magazines are getting it absolutely right. There are instances that cause concern and concern—maybe we could find better ways of ensuring we reach the right target markets. But putting age limits on them is not the best way of doing it. Doing what Mr Luff suggests could exacerbate the problem." Mr Locks said there were already disincentives for magazines overstepping the mark. "When major retailers delist a title as unsuitable, that is a very powerful sanction. In the end it has to be up to parents to ensure that what their children read is suitable for their age group and that individual child." A glance at several teenage magazines on sale this month reveals a substantial helping of sex. Morel, aimed at older readers but inevitably read by younger girls too, offers a "Valentine's special steamy sex test". Sugar, billing itself Britain's number one girls' mag, includes a 16-page booklet entitled: "Stop! Do you really know enough about sex?" Among the items is "London non-drug" which had "abortion" and "the no-sex guide to fun". Miz, includes a double page spread of a male model



Between the covers... A selection of teenage magazines promoting the sexual content that has offended MPs

The writer and broadcaster Clare Rayner, who presided over the House of Commons when, as an agony aunt in the 1960s, she answered a reader who inquired: "What is working?" We had exactly the same shreds over the teenage magazines in the late 60s and early 70s. There's nothing new under the sun. What it boils down to is that children want information. They are sizzling with sex and curiosity. All the evidence is that the more information they get, the less sexually active they become. To keep parents happy I would quite like to see some sort of classification, rather like the classification for videos, so parents can see this is not a magazine for 11-year-olds but aimed at 16-year-olds. But not censorship. I would rather my own children get information from a magazine rather than from behind the bike shed. At least it's accurate.

Mauro Townsend, aged 42, of Wiltshire, Marnley, whose 14-year-old daughter Shelly is a keen reader. I think these magazines are far too sexually explicit. But I would rather she reads them. At least she discusses things with me. Things like "seven steamy sex tips" and "is your boyfriend a good lover"—I think it's just encouraging under-age sex. I would not try to stop her because I think if that's what she wants to read, that's fine. At my convent boarding school I can remember being caught reading Fanny Hill. Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure. (John Cleland's 18th-century pornographic novel.) I nearly got expelled for that. I don't think this Bill is going to work. It's about as likely as stopping under-age kids from buying cigarettes. I'm just lucky I've got a daughter who is very sensible.

Shelly Townsend, aged 14. I used to read Just Seventeen all the time. I've been reading it since I was 11. When I look back, I think for 11-year-olds there's a bit too much about sex and stuff. I'm more into music magazines now, though sometimes I get things like Miz and Sugar. I think they're OK, but there are stories on every page about sex and the problems people have. I think they should cut down a bit. We want to read different things as well—interviews with pop stars and things like that. The problem pages say things like "I'm 14 and I've done this and that." It makes people think "Well, I'm 14 and I haven't done that yet." That's what I used to think. My mum's really open about things like that, we can talk about it, but I know that some of my friends' parents are a bit hush-hush. So magazines can be useful.

Kate Freeman, 12, of Woking, Surrey. I read Sugar, It's Bliss and Smash Hits. I don't think they should be banned or anything. I think they're really good. There's advice and stuff which is interesting, and it's not all about sex. I do think the sex should be there. We need to know about that kind of stuff. I can talk to my mum but some people can't. At school we talk about periods and things, but nothing else. I think the magazines are quite responsible. Most of it is just saying that you should never let someone do anything you don't want to. You should only do it if you're really happy. They go on about the age limit the whole time. I don't think it encourages anyone. It isn't really relevant to me at the moment—I haven't got boyfriends yet. But it will be relevant one day. I need to know now so I can think ahead.

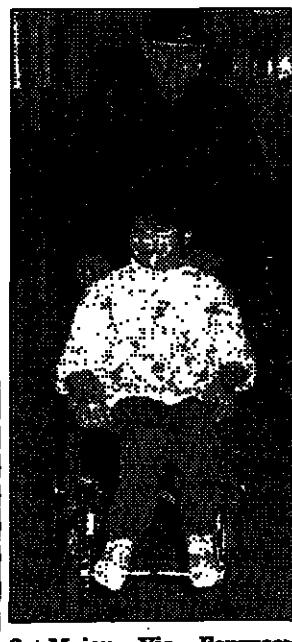
Scott hits back at critics

Richard Norton-Taylor

SIR Richard Scott has hit back at Whitehall-inspired attempts to undermine his arms-to-Iraq inquiry, describing criticism in advance of the publication of his long-awaited report as "worthless". Although he does not mention any names, his comments are directed above all at Lord Howe, the former foreign secretary, who has led the attacks on the way Sir Richard conducted the inquiry's public hearings. Lord Howe described Sir Richard and Presley Baxendale, the inquiry's counsel, in a recent article in the Spectator as "partners in a double-barrelled inquisition". He said the inquiry should have been conducted on adversarial lines, with witnesses examined by their own lawyers and cross-examination. But the judge says in an interview in a Channel 4 Dispatches programme to be broadcast tomorrow: "This is an inquisitorial inquiry and I do not see how you can have an inquisitorial inquiry without it being inquisitorial." The important requirement, he says, is that the procedure should be fair. Sir Richard sent witnesses questions in advance and gave them the opportunity to comment on provisional criticisms in draft extracts of his report. Witnesses have also had the access to legal advice Lord Howe has hired a large City law firm paid for out of public funds. "I hope that people will read [the report] and they will not form their opinion of it simply from a view being put out upon them by sources who have not read it," Sir Richard says. "Criticism in advance of reading it has got to be worthless, and I hope the public will realise that." The judge is concerned that his report will be used as a political football, diverting attention away from the unprecedented insight it gives into the workings of British government. He says he regrets that the initial reception of the report will be coloured by party politics. He says he hopes his report will be considered seriously, without preconception, and that his recommendations will be accepted by the Government. He adds: "The people who have uttered these criticisms were not on my Christmas card list anyway and they are not about to go on it." An inquiry conducted along the lines proposed by Lord Howe was proposed by Labour and the Liberal Democrats but rejected by the Government on the grounds that it would take too long. Lord Donaldson, former Master of the Rolls, has said that if witnesses' lawyers had the opportunity to cross-examine, "it wouldn't be an inquiry, it would be a circus."

Soldier eases girl's pain

continued from page 1 ing, so I don't get the benefits that come to the widow of a *Soldier* [marryer]. The sergeant-major's determination to improve Hurmija's life and his fair for organisation have generated a fundraising effort which has drawn in soldiers from across the world. "Everyday, I have letters—and people who've heard about Hurmija, coming up to me—offering help or just handing over money," he said. He has set up an account for the young girl, and has begun to organise an appeal. A British soldier is offering to run a fundraising marathon, a French major has written two emotional poems about her, and an anonymous American officer sent cash in an envelope. Sgt-Major Ferguson's daughter, Charlotte, has



Sgt-Major Vic Ferguson, with 12-year-old Hurmija

Brave words

Extract from a letter from Hurmija to Sgt-Major Ferguson's 11-year-old daughter, Charlotte. "We were sitting and playing under an apple tree. Suddenly one shell landed on the tree. At first, I felt like I was flying. I tried to stand but I just couldn't. "The days at the hospital are difficult. My mother and sisters come every day. And your father too. His visits are very important. He's so nice and generous, and I love him very much. You are very lucky to have Vic as a father. "I had a wonderful father too, but I don't know if I'm ever going to see him again. I always hope, I hope that I will walk again one day. I hope that I'll have my family in one place, and I also hope you'll answer my letter very soon."

'Buddha's birthplace' unearthed in Nepal

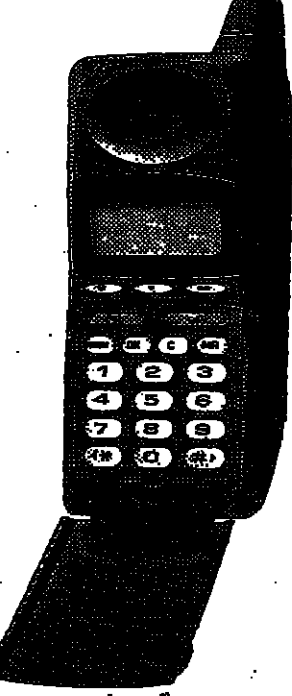
John Ezzard BUDDHISM'S equivalent of the stable in Bethlehem has been discovered in Nepal, an international team of archaeologists announced yesterday. They said a stone on a platform of bricks buried left under a temple marked where Prince Siddhartha Gautama, founder of the religion, was born 2,600 years ago. The relics are under the

Mayadevi temple in Lumbini, 200 miles south-west of Kathmandu, and date from the era of Emperor Ashoka, who ruled much of the subcontinent. The archaeologists— from Nepal, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Japan—made the discovery nine months ago, but the government delayed an announcement until it had consulted experts. Buddhist literature says that the Buddha's mother, Queen Mahamaya, dreamt in

623 BC that "a white elephant, beautiful as silver" entered her womb. While travelling she passed Lumbini. She went into labour, bathed in a sacred pond and gave birth. According to this account, Emperor Ashoka placed a stone on bricks at the birthplace, plus a pillar which still stands. Babu Krishna Rijal, an archaeologist with Lumbini Development Trust, said a detailed report would eventually be made public.

A new Motorola phone with change from one pound.

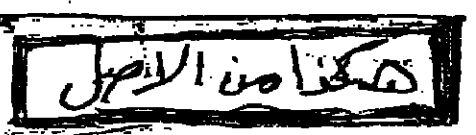
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# China fuels war of nerves

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

**I**N ITS fiercest display yet in an escalating battle of nerves with Taiwan, China has reportedly massed up to 400,000 troops in a coastal area newly designated a "war zone" prior to a massive, month-long military exercise. As fear of the People's Liberation Army again loomed Taiwan's stock exchange, its president, Lee Teng-hui, yesterday said Beijing's war games showed the Communist Party is "scared to death" of the island's burgeoning democracy.

Military sources confirmed troop movements in Fujian province facing Taiwan in preparation for exercises. An unconfirmed report in Hong Kong's Sing Tao Daily said China would deploy 300 warplanes, 20 elite infantry units, submarines and missile-bearing boats. It quoted an unnamed Chinese official saying any interference by Taiwanese ships or planes would make a clash "difficult to avoid".

China's manoeuvres, expected to start this week, provide a menacing counterpoint to campaigning in Taiwan for elections at the end of March.

March 23, 1996, is an important day in Chinese history because it is the first time the country holds democratic presidential elections. President Lee said yesterday in Taipei. "The Chinese communists are scared to death of this historic event."

Beijing sees the poll as a ploy to perpetuate Taiwan's status as a separate political entity and has denounced President Lee as bent on pushing it towards independence.

Beijing hopes military threats will hurt Mr Lee's chances of victory, or force him to abandon efforts to increase Taiwan's profile. But a new study of the PLA by the Stockholm International Peace Institute doubts whether China has the capability to launch an effective assault. However, political uncertainty has sparked fears that the imperatives of internal power struggles could override military logic.

The tension is causing deep unease in the United States. The Washington Post reported yesterday that US officials had decided to formally warn China that "heightened tension could lead to miscalculation and accident".



Yeovil, scene of firebombings and other attacks

**'Utterly disgraceful' report of alleged claims by former massage parlour owner follows Liberal Democrat leader's stand against racial attacks in Somerset seat**



Paddy Ashdown in Yeovil yesterday... 'I will take the actions necessary to make sure those who commit crimes are brought to book' PHOTOGRAPHS TIM CLIFF

# Ashdown sues paper over 'sex smear' story

Geoffrey Gibbs

**T**HE Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown yesterday launched a libel action against a Bristol-based daily newspaper for publishing what he called "an utterly disgraceful" article referring to a smear campaign about his personal life.

Under the banner headline "Sex Smear on Paddy", the Western Daily Press repeated allegations said to have been made against the MP by Peter Stoodley, former owner of a Yeovil massage parlour closed down by the Liberal Democrat controlled district council two years ago.

The message parlour — a brothel in all but name — was the cause of acute embarrassment for Yeovil's Lib Dems in November 1994 when it emerged that Nikki Vickers, the daughter of a former liberal Democrat mayor who had sat on the planning committee that forced the establish-

ment's closure, had worked there as a prostitute.

Mr Stoodley, whose nephew was one of three men arrested and released on police bail in connection with last week's firebomb attack on Mr Ashdown's car, is understood to have tried to pass the story to a number of national newspapers before its publication in Bristol yesterday.

The 53-year-old grandfather, jailed for six months for living on immoral earnings of women at the City Girl establishment, was not available for comment at the flat he owns close to the Liberal Democrat constituency offices in the town centre.

Mr Ashdown, who has represented Yeovil for 13 years, has been the target of threatening phone calls since taking a high profile stand against racist attacks in the Somerset town. He said he had been aware of the allegations for some time.

Liberal democrats have been bracing themselves for the possibility that the

smears will be raised in court later this week, when Mr Ashdown is expected to be a witness in committal proceedings involving a man charged with affray and possession of an offensive weapon.

The 51-year-old man is alleged to have threatened Mr Ashdown with a knife during a street incident last November when the former marine commando was on a late night fact-finding tour of the town to see for himself the problems faced by Yeovil's tiny ethnic population.

Mr Ashdown refused to comment on the smears yesterday but made it clear that he would not let them deter him from stamping out "the scourge of terrorism and intimidation" in the town. If required to do so he would be in court as a witness for the pending hearing.

"I am not prepared to be dissuaded from taking action," he said at the party's constituency offices yesterday. "That is what the town has suffered from for so long.

And I will follow through, in the face of whatever deterrent or whatever threat, the actions that I think are necessary in order to make sure that those who commit crimes in this town are brought to book."

A spokesman for Mr Ashdown's lawyers, who served the writ on Bristol United Press, publishers of the Western Daily Press, said: "They have plunged like some elephant into a trap of their own making. I can't believe it."

Western Daily Press editor Ian Beales was said by the paper's newsdesk to be unavailable for comment.

The sex smear allegations against Mr Ashdown and the recent arson attack that destroyed the MP's car close to his home in the village of Norton-Sub-Hamdon are the culmination of a complex series of events that have brought unwelcome notoriety to Somerset's third largest town.

The MP has fallen foul of some elements in the town after taking a leading role in

the Partnership Against Racial Harassment in Somerset, a cross-party coalition established last autumn in the wake of the fire bombing of a Kabah house run by an ethnic Turkish family.

Other restaurants in the same part of town have also suffered attacks and staff complain of frequent incidents of verbal and physical abuse. The population of Bangladeshi, Turkish, Thai and Iranian restaurants owners and staff make up 0.5 per cent of the town's 38,000 population. They have found themselves isolated and vulnerable.

Contrary to tabloid myth, however, Yeovil is no Wild West town. Despite the high profile coverage given to the firebomb attack on Mr Ashdown's car and to the earlier street incident in which the MP was allegedly threatened with a knife, law and order has not experienced a general breakdown. Newspaper talk of gangs of "ciderheads" and "boomtown rats" on the ram-

page provokes bemusement among local people.

Rumours persist that some of the trouble may be linked to protection rackets. But residents say the police have been frustrated in trying to get convictions because potential witnesses often fear retaliation.

Questions about who is ultimately behind the firebombs and other attacks that have blackened the town's reputation elicits the same names. "There is a hard core gang of two or three families — who are behind these sort of attacks," said one observer of the town's troubles who asked not to be named. "They have henchmen who carry them out for them and anybody who stands up against them is threatened and targeted. It's not just racism."

Councillors and social workers in the town are among those understood to have faced threats after crossing the families concerned.

Police are currently investi-

gating a number of fire-related incidents in the town, including a firebomb attack on the offices of the Western Gazette newspaper last October which caused £100,000 damage. No one has been arrested, but staff are convinced the attack was triggered by the leading role the Gazette has played in highlighting racist attacks in the town.

After speaking out at the time of the alleged knife attack on their local MP members of the ethnic population are now reluctant to talk for fear of provoking further trouble.

Silence has not brought respite however. Only a week after Mr Ashdown's late night tour a mob gathered in "takeaway alley" shouting abuse and threatening staff in a tandoori restaurant.

Staff at the restaurant said people were too scared to eat there because of the troubles. "Look around the restaurant, it's empty. We've been ruined by what's happened," one worker said.

# Taste of the future put to the test

Gary Younger seeks expert opinion on genetically altered tomato puree

**W**ITH an open mind and a refined palate Mariano Casotti brought the spoonful of genetically modified Californian tomato puree to his mouth and tasted the future.

"Not much difference," he said of the puree, on sale for the first time in Sainsbury and Safeway stores yesterday. He smacked his lips, washed his spoon and went back to his traditionally grown Italian puree for further comparison.

What Mr Casotti does not know about pasta and sauces is probably not worth knowing. For the past 35 years the assistant executive chef to Spaghetti House has been up and making the company's pasta by the tubful while the rest of the country has scarcely thought of breakfast.

But taste, he says, isn't everything. "The colour is very rich and dark which could lead to the colour of meat in a bolognese sauce. And the texture is slightly rougher... more starchy," he said, absent-mindedly patting both dishes of red goo smooth with the bottom of his spoon.

He conferred in Italian with Riccardo Lavarini to ensure the two connoisseurs spoke with one, satiated, tongue.

"Without comparing actual dishes it is a little difficult to say but usually we use puree Spaghetti House. I must say I'm a little uncomfortable with the name. People like to think that they are getting freshly prepared



Mariano Casotti with the new puree PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEAVER

food. This sounds a little too scientific."

It took 21 years of research to produce the 29p can of puree in question. The big breakthrough came in 1988 when they isolated the enzyme which accelerates the rotting process in tomatoes, allowing growers to produce longer-lasting, firmer-textured fruit.

The benefits are that firmer tomatoes will not go squasy when they are handled; more arrive at shops intact and once there they do not deteriorate as quickly.

The Sainsbury's version comes with a special leaflet reassuring customers that all ethical considerations have been taken into account. It has even earned the approval of their advisory committee on genetic modification. "We treat the ethical issues relating to genetically modified

products on a case by case basis. With tomatoes there did not seem to be a problem," said a Sainsbury's spokesman last night, insisting that demand will determine how long it remains on the shelves. For the sceptics there is a freephone number for further explanation.

For those who just want something cheap and tasty to put on their pizza bases most of the information is on the tin. "There is a European proposal that novel foods — if they are substantially different from the originals — will have to be labelled. And they will have to be labelled if there is an ethical or religious consideration," said Dr Gavin Cree of the BioIndustry Association yesterday.

But for Mr Casotti the proof of the puree, genetically modified or not, will always be in the eating.

## Gene genius

**B**EYOND the genetically modified tomato lie huge possibilities, writes Tim Radford. Some are ready for testing, some are twinkles in the geneticists' eyes. They include:

□ The hairy killer potato with a high density of glandular trichomes transferred from a wild potato. Any Colorado beetle that eats the leaves will suffer serious constipation, crushing its ovaries. Any smaller creature will get stuck to the hairs.

□ Tracey the sheep is a potential lifesaver in a field near Edinburgh. In each litre of her milk are 85 grams of human alpha-1 antitrypsin, a protein vital in the treatment of emphysema or cystic fibrosis.

□ Michigan State University scientists have taken a gene from a bacterium that makes tiny amounts of biodegradable thermoplastic and slipped it into sugar beet hoping to turn 10 per cent of the harvest into industrial-grade polymer.

□ Astrid the pig at Cambridge has a gene for producing human complement, which recognises foreign tissue and rejects it. This opens the way to supplying heart transplants for humans from pigs.

□ Genes that make a jellyfish gleam have been transferred to a tobacco plant, which glows when it is attacked by fungus — allowing farmers to isolate affected plants for treatment.

*...in striking diagnostic terms, to a gastrointestinal virus which the liberals and Labour leftists of the West. It has been established that the principal agent of Zymopsis is said to be more common here, in the Alps...*

*The usually leads to the presence of one of the few clinical forms of hepatitis, namely the acute, disseminated primary hepatitis, following a...*

*...formation of the virus is supported by various laboratory cultures and records of the contagious tissue structure of the course, reliable...*

*Several reasons and multiple measures in the disease agent may also occur and this will usually occur in symptoms such as a severe, acute, gastrointestinal tract bleeding and abdominal discomfort. In the very early stages, however, necessary the surgical removal of the disease tissue and the use of various antibiotics, in some cases as high as 100 mg per kg body weight per day for 10 days...*

*Intensive research has indicated that the duration of respiratory infection is usually to be a period in excess of ninety six hours.*

*Those who are particularly susceptible to gastrointestinal Zymopsis include the elderly and the diabetic, as well as those who are in the process of receiving glucocorticoids and depreminine therapy.*

*And I don't think it needs a person of my intelligence to understand that in addition to the fact that I have been previously diagnosed as suffering from gastroenteritis, a hematology laboratory has also shown a significantly greater risk of the type of infection of the gastrointestinal tract...*

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**The Lords, even divested of hereditary voters, would remain an abuse of democracy, the country's biggest quango. And no ordinary quango, but a dolled-up doppelgänger for the Commons, stuffed with placelords and placeladies whose political allegiances neatly matched those of their creators.**

## G2 cover story

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# Lilley put in dock over refugees

Alan Travis  
Home Affairs Editor

**T**HE High Court yesterday cleared the way for a legal challenge to the Government's decision to withdraw welfare benefits from up to 30,000 asylum seekers a year.

A full judicial review hearing to be held on Wednesday could lead to a high court injunction against Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary.

The case will be heard alongside challenges brought by both Westminster, and Hammersmith and Fulham councils, also claiming Mr Lilley has acted illegally. The benefit cuts came into effect from midnight yesterday.

The action brought yesterday by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants claims the £200 million a year benefit cuts were *ultra vires* and improper because they would effectively curtail asylum seekers' ability to pursue claims to be refugees.

Mr Justice Brooke agreed the council had "an arguable case" that asylum seekers were entitled to be treated as genuine refugees until their claims were determined, and were therefore entitled to claim benefits unless and until their claims were proved bogus.

Mr Lilley's counsel in court, Steven Kovata, fiercely resisted the suggestion that the benefit cuts were in any way illegal — but he did concede there would be "individual cases of hardship".

He also said it was a matter of political judgment to bal-

ance public expenditure savings and the large number of unsuccessful appeals against those individual cases.

The Government also denied that the United Nations conventions on Refugees and the Rights of the Child were part of English law.

But Nicholas Blake, QC, for the council, said there were 267 cases last year of people who were recognised as refugees only when their appeals were heard. They would be among those no longer eligible to claim housing benefit, income support or other welfare benefits.

He said the measures could lead to destitute immigrant families being driven on to the streets — or "improperly forced" to return to countries where they feared persecution. The regulations were an unlawful means to dissuade asylum seekers from pursuing appeals.

Last night council spokesman Claude Moraes said he was delighted at the decision. He said the action aimed to ensure that asylum seekers had the health and sustenance to make their claims and pursue their appeals.

Both Labour and Liberal Democrats demanded that the Government think again and withdraw the regulations.

Chris Smith, Labour's social services spokesman, who said the Judge had clearly shared his misgivings about the impact of the changes, claimed the decision was a major setback for Mr Lilley.

The Liberal Democrats said they hoped the full judicial review succeeded.



Firefighters gather outside the Department of the Environment offices in London yesterday to protest about threatened cuts in the fire service

PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

**FIREFIGHTERS** protesting about job cuts in London demonstrated outside the Department of the Environment yesterday, writes Alex Bellis. They are angry that hundreds

of jobs will be lost and four stations face closure because of a funding controversy. London's fire authority claims its budget has been cut by millions of pounds. It says

it has to make savings by losing jobs, closing stations and withdrawing a number of appliances. Meanwhile in Bristol, colleagues of 21-year-old Fleur

Lombard, the first British woman firefighter to die on service, paid her a silent tribute. Members of her blue watch from Speedwell fire station, north Bristol, laid flo-

ral tributes at the supermarket where she died on Sunday. They ringed the main entrance of the Co-op store in Staple Hill, where Ms Lombard was one of the first

to enter with firefighter Rob Seaman. Mr Seaman, who escaped with slight injuries, was recovering yesterday at home.

## Hit squad shot soccer player during match

Ernest Clouston

**M**EMBERS of a hit squad who attempted to assassinate the wrong man during a football match were yesterday sent to jail for a total of 65 years.

The sentences, believed to be the longest ever imposed in Scotland for a crime other than murder, followed an attempt to silence a witness.

Glasgow High Court heard that only luck and a faulty pistol had prevented wholesale slaughter during the match between Hillhouse Amateurs and Barrhead Moor at Uplawmoor, near Glasgow, on October 14 last year.

Robert Taylor, aged 28, Andrew Elliott, aged 31, both of Glasgow, and 37-year-old Essdale Campbell, from Hamilton, were told by Lord Johnston that there were no grounds for exercising mercy in a case in which a Hillhouse fullback, waiting for a corner, received two bullets instead.

The court was told that the gunman's target should have been the Hillhouse treasurer, John Martin. A former friend of Campbell, he had been due to be a witness at a trial in which Campbell's son and an-



Charles Ballantyne, the defender shot in error

other youth were charged with stabbing his nephew.

The would-be killers, however, mistook left back Charles Ballantyne for Mr Martin. As the 32-year-old British Telecom worker from Motherwell prepared for the corner with Hillhouse comfortably ahead 4-0, he spotted Taylor pointing a gun at his head and then heard his six-

year-old son shout: "My daddy's been shot."

The first bullet lodged just above Mr Ballantyne's left ear. As he tried to crawl away Taylor fired again, but this time the bullet glanced off his back. The crowd pursued Taylor who shot and missed again.

Before Elliott held back the shocked spectators with what he claimed was a shotgun wrapped in a roll of paper, Taylor tried three times to fire his pistol, but the firing pin was off-line.

Campbell, who had been waiting nearby, then drove the two men off in his car. They were cornered by police after a 30mph chase.

Taylor, who pleaded guilty half way through the trial, was sentenced to 25 years, five of which were for firing on the crowd. His companions were each sentenced to 20 years.

Afterwards, a Strathclyde policeman said the men had broken every rule in the mafia hitman's manual: "Campbell used his own car, they tried to carry out an execution not only in front of witnesses but in the middle of a football field, and then they shot the wrong man."

## Old Etonian in gem fraud freed after paying £227,000

Barbie Dutter

**DARIUS** Guppy, the Old Etonian convicted of a £1.8 million insurance swindle, was released from prison yesterday after paying £227,000 in compensation to Lloyd's of London.

Guppy, aged 30, had served three years of a five year sentence for staging a bogus gems robbery in New York in 1990, then fraudulently claiming insurance damages. He was sent back to prison in December after failing to obey an order to compensate the insurers.

Guppy, who was best man at the wedding of the Princess of Wales's brother, Earl Spencer, had been freed pending an appeal against a second, three-year prison term, but his bail order was revoked by a High Court judge and he spent Christmas in Ford open prison in Sussex.

Guppy set up the fraud with Benedict Marshall, his partner in a jewellery firm. They paid an associate £10,000 to tie them up and supposedly rob them at gunpoint. Their false invoices for £1.8 million worth of stones were paid by underwriting syndicates. Both were jailed for five years in March 1993.

In April 1994, Guppy lost an appeal against the length of his jail term, but his £535,000 fine was replaced with a £227,000 compensation order.

## Smear re-tests 'not alarming'

Chris Millill  
Medical Correspondent

**T**HOUSANDS of women are to have their cervical smears re-examined after missed abnormalities were found, a health authority said yesterday.

Health chiefs said the moves were proof that safety checks were working rather than evidence of blunders.

Women in Kent and Canterbury who had smears between 1990 and 1995 are to have their slides reviewed by an independent laboratory.

The hospital admitted that possibly 700 women who had been told they were in the clear might have had some suspicious signs on their slides, although that did not mean they had cancer.

No women are being recalled for fresh tests, but they will be informed of the findings within 14 days. The move follows a review by outside laboratories which found some abnormalities on the slides had been missed.

Kent and Canterbury carries out 27,000 smears a year, and as part of quality control procedures sent some 11,000 slides to two labs in Manchester and Birmingham for double-checking. The results suggested there were question marks over 89 of them.

detect something which should be investigated — it does not diagnose cancer.

The NHS Cervical Screening Programme, the national screening body, pointed out that all health authorities and laboratories were now enrolled in quality assurance programmes using external examiners to judge standards, and work was continuing to ensure all screeners reached consistent standards.

National co-ordinator Julietta Patrick said death from cervical cancer had fallen from 1,485 in 1993 to 1,396 in 1994 largely due to the programme's effectiveness.

She added: "No screening programme is 100 per cent accurate but the NHS CSP is working to improve the accuracy of interpretation of smears by laboratories and to increase the consistency with which abnormalities are classified as minor or severe."

Cervical screeners explained that smears are examined using microscopes to look at cell changes on slides, but interpreting sometimes a matter of judgment rather than a clear-cut science.

Kate Neales, consultant gynaecologist at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, said: "Women should not be unduly alarmed, but should be encouraged that we are taking these steps to improve our services for the future."

The hospital yesterday opened a telephone helpline for worried patients: 01227 766016.

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Labour presses for franchise re-run after allegations of ticket fraud on Southend line

# Inquiry risk to rail licence

Rebecca Smithers and Keith Harper

THE GOVERNMENT conceded yesterday that the inquiry into an alleged ticket fraud on the London Tilbury and Southend rail line might force it to withdraw the licence from the present holders, Enterprise Rail, and hold a second round of bidding for the franchise.

Labour pressed for a commitment that the franchising would be rerun, and called on the financial backers of Enterprise Rail, a management buy-out team, to clarify whether they plan to withdraw their support for the company.

agency question from Sir Teddy Taylor, whose South-end constituency is on the line in question. The allegations relate to the re-issuing of tickets at a station used both by mainline and Tube trains which has deprived London Underground of up to £45,000 over the last six weeks.

Clare Short, the shadow transport secretary, urged Sir George to "give us an undertaking that the offer to allow this management team to run this service will be withdrawn... if the allegations are true".

pending on the outcome of the investigations by British Rail and the Government's own regulators, the final decision was down to Mr Salmon. Despite Mr Salmon's assurances yesterday that he expected the privatisation to be back on track within a month, he promised that there was no question of the investigation being rushed.

"The question is whether reputable investors want anything to do with the alleged malpractices which go hand in hand with the fragmentation and privatisation of the railways". Sir George also confirmed that, following the resignation last week of Colin Andrews, commercial director of LTS Rail, another senior staff member had been suspended.



Holman Hunt's masterpiece The Light of the World undergoes expert examination yesterday after being removed from St Paul's Cathedral in London for conservation work. The picture, one of three versions painted by the artist, has been stained by candle smoke and the fingers of the faithful but should be back in place by summer. PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

## News in brief

### Jail threat for Tory ex-leader

THE former deputy Tory leader of Lambeth Council, south London, faces a jail sentence after pleading guilty yesterday to procuring a mortgage by deception and five counts of dishonestly obtaining housing benefit in 1994 to pay his mortgage. Peter John Evans, 35, who resigned on Sunday, was remanded on bail at Snaresbrook crown court for pre-sentence and psychiatric reports. Judge Andrew Brooks said: "I don't want you to leave the dock thinking you are going to get away with this. I am thinking of passing a custodial sentence."

### Blizzard halts murder dig

A BLIZZARD yesterday brought a halt to an attempt to solve the suspected murder of Danny Dyke, aged 31, an osteopath who operated as a drug dealer. South Wales police had started digging near a village of Gurnswilt in West Glamorgan but had to abandon the search when the snow became too heavy. Mr Dyke, a former physiotherapist with the Welsh rugby club, Aberavon, and said to have been a supplier of cocaine and cannabis, went missing from his home in Eastbourne, East Sussex in April 1994. He was last seen in Swansea and his car was found in a car park in Brecon, Powys. — Duncan Campbell

### Footballer's fatal kick

A WOLVERHAMPTON Wanderers footballer, James Kelly, killed a man by kicking his head like a football in an early morning brawl outside a hotel. Liverpool crown court heard yesterday. Peter Dunphy, 36, collapsed and lay still and died almost instantly from the blow to the base of the skull and upper neck, said prosecuting counsel David Steer, QC. Kelly, of Willenhall, west Midlands, has admitted manslaughter. His brother, John Kelly, 23, of Everton, and Kevin Atkinson, 22, of Tuebrook, both Liverpool, have admitted assault. The case continues today.

### Remand decision defended

SOCIAL service staff yesterday defended a decision to house a youth on remand in a flat attached to an old people's home, because of a national shortage of secure accommodation. The 14-year-old boy, remanded into the care of Calderdale council, West Yorkshire, by a juvenile court, was placed in the flat under one-to-one supervision when all other options failed. The council emphasised yesterday that the rooms in Halifax had a separate entrance to the adjacent Claremont House elderly people's home. A spokeswoman said: "We are making every effort to find suitable accommodation to meet his individual needs, but there is a national shortage of this and similar demands are being made by other authorities." — Martin Wainwright

### Lottery plea to rural districts

RURAL areas which were significantly under-represented in millennium lottery grants were urged yesterday by Jennifer Page, the chief executive of the Millennium Commission, to get in more applications. The second round of applications closes next week, and the third and probably final round in July. By the end of the year the commission expects to have allocated all its £1.2 billion fund for capital grants. "We have racked our brains on why the rural applicants are not coming forward," she told a seminar in London. "There may be some mistaken belief that grants are destined only for grand metropolitan projects." When the commissioners canvassed public opinion they found overwhelming support for environmental and community projects. — Moya Kennedy

### Power station in movie bid

MOVE over Pinewood, stand aside Ealing. The future of Britain's film industry may lie in the great turbine hall of a redundant power station at Trawstynyd, near Blaenau Ffestiniog, in Wales. A consortium of local councils is promoting the huge concrete hulk as an ideal home for complex movie sets. — Martin Wainwright

## Row erupts as Booker alters rules

Michael Ellison Arts Correspondent

BRITAIN'S best-known book prize had barely recovered from the recent shock of selecting a relatively uncontroversial winner when it re-established its reputation for conflict yesterday. A good 10 months before the next Booker Prize will be awarded to succeed Pat Barker, literary publishers were angered by a change in the rules. The judges had to plough through a record 141 novels last year and organisers decided something must be done to prevent word-fugue.



'Before winning I always thought the best thing about the prize would be never having to think about the Booker again in your life. I'd still be happy with that, but I don't think my publisher would' — Pat Barker

rows over suggestions that the award might be scrapped (the late Sir Kingsley Amis); claims of persistent exclusion from the shortlist (Martin Amis); the selection of James Kelman as winner in 1994; and the observation that modern fiction is an "ordale" (John Bayley, chairman of the judges, also 1994). But Dan Franklin, publishing director of Cape, said: "I'm appalled by the rule change. Reducing the number of titles entered means you will end up with a dull, safe list. In the old days you would discover new writers, not the obvious people. Now you're never going to get any first novels on there, or difficult or dangerous books."

## Crofters offered ownership in Highlands funding deal

Erlend Clouston

TWO of the shackles on the Highland economy were loosened yesterday with the announcement of plans that could revolutionise both land ownership patterns and contact with the outside world. About 1,400 crofters are to be offered the chance to take over — in some cases without charge — their government-owned estates. The increased business activity expected to spring from this should be aided by a £46 million telecommunications network which will ultimately bring 95 per cent of the region within mobile phone range. Details of the Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, at the first Inverness sitting of the Scottish Grand Committee. He unveiled a mixture of European Union and private sector funding to the region worth £130 million and more than 1,000 new jobs. Around £4 million of EU funding will go towards the telecommunication network, with the £42 million balance provided by Cellnet and Vodafone. Iain Robertson, chief executive of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, said the investment would be invaluable to northern businessmen, as well as offering "potentially lifesaving benefits" to medical staff, fishermen, hill-walkers and motorists. A further £2.3 million of EU funds will enable Barmac's fabrication yard at Nigg in Easter Ross to compete in the international market for floating oil production systems. Land reformers, who blame indifferent estate owners for the stagnation of many Highland communities, will hope that the plan to divest the Scottish Office of its 6.3 million crofting acres, presages the break-up of a system which has blighted the area for more than two centuries. Mr Forsyth said a consultancy paper would be mailed to tenants outlining the benefits of transferring ownership to of community trusts. "We are community trusts," he said. "We are prepared, if circumstances justify it, to transfer certain crofts free of charge." The Scottish Crofters' Union broadly welcomed the proposals. "We hope all Scottish Office crofters seriously consider the offer," said crofting adviser Fiona Mandaville.

## Man jailed for 18 years for armed robberies — and killing his father

AMAN who killed his violent, bullying father while he was a teenager and buried the body in the cellar was jailed for 18 years yesterday at the Old Bailey. Stephen French, aged 32, was given five years for manslaughter, 12 years for a string of robberies and an additional 12 months for escaping from custody. Passing sentence, the Recorder of London, Sir Lawrence Vaux, accepted French's "childhood of staggering evil" but said it did not justify the solution. The court was told after the killing, French, then only 14, wanted to tell police but his mother discouraged him and made him promise to remain silent while she was alive. It was not until he was in prison on remand for robberies that he called police to his cell and described how he shot his father, Peter Leslie, in the head as he slept, and eventually buried the remains in a house in Forest Gate, east London, where it remained for 17 years. French denied murdering his 63-year-old father but admitted manslaughter. He also pleaded guilty to several robberies, attempted robberies and escaping from custody in 1992. Orlando Pownall, prosecuting, told the court how French and others tried to dispose of his father's body. He said acid and lime were poured on to it to dissolve it but when this failed it was cut in half and put in two drums in the garden and attempts made to burn it. It was a childhood of "staggering evil" which had affected French throughout his adult life, said Rock Tansey QC, defending. The court heard how Mr Leslie would knock out the children's teeth, crack their ribs and point shotguns at their heads and threaten to shoot them. Once he forced French to eat a meal containing dog food, bleach and sink cleaner. When the boy vomited he was made to eat that too. In his confession to police, French explained: "All my life he had bullied, hit and abused the family. I just snapped, I didn't want the pain and the continual harassment. "He was just one evil person."

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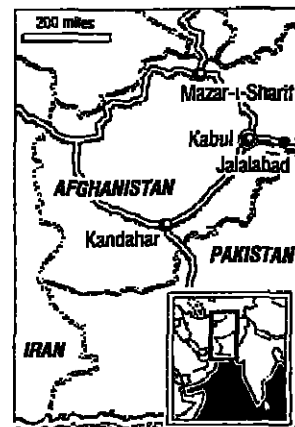
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After 18 years of warfare, Afghans can see little difference between rival Muslim factions, and find life as harsh under their present government as they did under its communist predecessor

John Burns reports



Pedlars... Kabul traders use bicycles to shop for scarce goods beyond the siege lines. Many do not make it back across no man's land to the ruins among which their fellow citizens live

# Kabul's misery wears a single face

FIVE young Afghans met on a bitterly cold morning last week for the gamble of a lifetime. On borrowed bicycles, they planned to cross siege lines south of Kabul, load up with sacks of flour, cans of petrol and bundles of firewood, and be back home by noon. The threefold price difference between the Kabul bazaars and the traders outside the city, they calculated, would give them enough profit to pay the bicycle owners and keep their families from the hunger and cold of Kabul for a month. A few hours later one of them, a former professional boxer called Hamid, was near death in the intensive care unit of a hospital about a mile behind the front lines. He was not expected to survive. The villagers who found him said the other four were killed by the machine-gun fire that met them as they rounded a corner in no man's land between the government troops and the besieging forces of the Taliban. The militant Islamic force which pushed to within a mile of Kabul's outskirts in the autumn. At least 20 died in such forays last week. In the dim room where Hamid lay semi-conscious, the only sounds were the groaning and weeping of fellow traders and other victims of bombing raids, mines and artillery barrages. At his bedside his mother, Aysha, said: "The people who

did this are no Muslims. They are the henchmen of Satan and they will surely suffer in hell." It is 18 years this spring since Marxist conspirators overthrew the Afghan president and set off a civil war, seven years next week since the last of the Soviet troops who invaded in December 1979, ostensibly in support of those Marxist rulers, withdrew, bludgeoned by nine years of fighting American-backed Muslim guerrillas. In April it will be four years since the puppet communist government the Russians left behind finally collapsed, giving way to a new civil war between rival Muslim groups. In a country that had 15.5 million people before the communist takeover, at least a million have been killed and 2 million displaced within Afghanistan. Six million others were driven across the borders into Pakistan and Iran, and less than half of those have returned in the last four years. Relief agencies estimate that about 2 million more have been permanently disabled, physically or mentally. In the crumbling streets and overcrowded hospital wards there is an angry feeling that these are the worst times since the communist takeover. So desprised is the mood that it is common to hear people say that the "Russian time" — once a synonym for brutality — was not so bad after all. "Ah, the Russian time — that was golden, compared to this," said a doctor at the Karts Seh Hospital, watching orderlies carrying in the body of a 14-year-old boy whose brain had been blown out by a Taliban bombing raid. In part the gloom is a product of one of the harshest winters in memory: scores go to hospital each morning with frostbite. In part it is caused by the scarcity of food, made worse than ever this winter by a tightening of the siege by the Muslim guerrillas groups which control the roads from Mazar-i-Sharif in the north, Jalalabad in the east and Kandahar in the south, previously never closed for more than a few days at a time. On Saturday the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) began an emergency airlift from Peshawar, 70 minutes across the mountains in Pakistan. It plans to fly more than 1,000 tonnes of wheat to Bagram, a former Soviet air field 20 miles north-east of Kabul which is still under government control. A year ago, when the Taliban first reached the gates of Kabul, many in the city saw them as potential liberators, despite their intolerance in Kandahar, where the movement was formed and has its headquarters. There, women were denied the right to work, ordered to wear full veils, and punished if caught outside their homes with men other than their fathers and brothers. Word of these strictures ap-



peared to have less of an impact in Kabul than the Taliban's success in overwhelming several of the contending guerrilla groups left over from the Soviet occupation. But their promise to end the war then make way for a popularly elected government quickly evaporated as they began pounding Kabul with heavy artillery, just like the guerrillas they supplanted. In May the capital celebrated when the forces of Ahmad Shah Massoud, the military commander who is the power behind President Burhanuddin Rabbani's govern-

'We fought against the country that Ronald Reagan called the evil empire, and it was as a result of our sacrifices that the evil empire collapsed. But afterward we were forgotten'

Najibullah Lafiaie, foreign minister

ment, struck the Taliban with a lightning offensive and drove them back 30 miles from the capital. But in September the Taliban was back. After capturing the western city of Herat from Ismail Khan, an ally of General Massoud, they drove back up the road to Kabul and threatened to overrun the city before Gen Massoud stiffened his defences. Since then the daily artillery barrages have resumed, together with bombing attacks by the Taliban's embryonic air force. Last week two 1,000lb bombs fell on an area of southern Kabul bombed to rubble between 1992 and 1995. Many people still live in the rubble and the bombs killed at least 20 and wounded many more. Hospital emergency rooms were awash with blood. Thousands more have died, bringing the civilian toll in the capital since the communist collapse in 1992 to at least 25,000, ICRC officials say. The government says the figure is at least 45,000. But even the lower figure is more than the 10,000 to 15,000 said to have died in the 40-month siege of Sarajevo. Because there is only a vestigial international presence here — no UN military force of the kind that tried to limit the conflict in Bosnia, and only skeleton staffs at the international relief agencies which distribute food, medical supplies and other aid — the distress seems more acute. The government blames the carnage on Pakistan, which has backed the Taliban, apparently to win favour with two powerful Pakistani groups: the Islamic militants and Pakistan's own ethnic Pashtuns who are indistinguishable from the Afghan Pashtuns who predominate in the Taliban. Pakistan's role has angered Iran, Russia and India, which have given concerted support in recent months to the Rabbani government, even though it is led by members of the ethnic Tajik minority, which has held power in Afghanistan only once before in the last 250 years. Planes carrying arms, ammunition, spares and other supplies paid for by Tehran, Moscow and Delhi fly into Bagram every night. Almost as much opposition is directed at the United States, which poured more than \$5 billion (\$2.4 billion) in cash and arms into the Muslim guerrilla struggle against the Soviet forces, then virtually turned its back on Afghan affairs when the cold war ended. The US Agency for International Development ended its relief effort in 1994 and Amer-

## Mexican army moves in to break oilfield blockade

Phil Gannon in Mexico City

TENSION remained high yesterday in the oilfields of south-east Mexico, after a series of operations by the army, navy and police at the weekend to begin removing protesters who had blockaded 51 oil wells. The leader of the protest movement, Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the opposition Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), broke off talks with the state-owned oil company Pemex after the army was sent in on Friday. But he was due to resume negotiations yesterday. The blockade, whose main purpose is to secure compensation for peasants in Tabasco state whose land has been damaged by drilling, was said by some sources to have cost the company more than \$400,000 (\$280,000) a day. The Tabasco oilfields are among the most important in Latin America, and this is the second time in less than a year that the PRD has led a blockade of drilling sites. Mr López Obrador warned in a speech on Sunday that the government would need "20,000 soldiers to control this movement, because there are 200,000 of us willing to wage a peaceful struggle for our rights". He said if the ejection of protesters was not halted, a blockade of all the state's oil installations would be considered. Pemex yesterday responded with full-page advertisements in national newspapers detailing nearly \$40 million in financial support to Tabasco state last year. In response to corruption allegations, the company claimed virtually all the money was "directly administered by Pemex", not by state authorities. Mr López Obrador, however, wants a full-scale audit of the oil company's contributions to the state government. The governor of Tabasco, Roberto Madrazo of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), has attributed the protest campaign to Mr López Obrador's political ambitions. The PRD leader lost to Mr Madrazo in the 1994 state elections, which the opposition claims were rigged. Later this week, the supreme court is to rule on whether a federal investigation of the Tabasco PRI's allegedly massive violation of 1994 campaign spending limits should proceed. The protests, Mr Madrazo said, were aimed at influencing the court's decision and "launching López Obrador's campaign for the national leadership of his party". Mr López Obrador, a rising radical in the PRD, is a strong contender for the party presidency in internal elections due later this year. Although the PRD leadership has expressed solidarity with the Tabasco protest, its president, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, is concerned that it could affect the national dialogue on political reform. Yesterday's talks were also to consider demands that Pemex cut petrol and domestic gas prices in Tabasco, present the National Human Rights Commission with plans to reduce pollution and provide maintenance for pipelines, one of which blew up in 1994. Mr López Obrador has also demanded the release of six PRD leaders arrested last Friday on charges of sabotage.

### News in brief

#### Asian women form 'fastest growing pool of cheap labour'

LEFT out of Asia's economic success story, women from poorer parts of the region have become the world's fastest growing pool of cheap and often abused migrant labour, according to the International Labour Office, writes Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong. About 1.5 million women, mostly from the Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand, now work abroad,

mostly as maids, nurses and "entertainers", a euphemism for a booming sex industry. Whereas women accounted for only 15 per cent of the Asian migrant workforce in the 1970s, they now equal or outnumber the number of male migrant workers. A major reason for the surge was a proliferation of illegal recruitment agencies servicing a growing demand for female labour in the Gulf

and more prosperous areas of Asia, the ILO said yesterday. Well-organised smugglers trade increasingly in women. Among the indignities inflicted on women working abroad are pregnancy tests every six months. Others are forced into prostitution after migrating on promises of legitimate work. Domestic service and entertainment were rarely covered by labour laws or social security, leaving

many female migrants defenceless against abuse, said the ILO report. The abuse of women workers has become a sensitive political issue across Asia, straining relations between countries that send and those that employ them. Poorer countries sporadically vow to halt sending citizens overseas but have become too dependent on their earnings to take real action.

#### Guatemala's leader attacked as pope arrives

THOUSANDS of Catholics yesterday carpeted the streets of Guatemala City with flower-petal images to greet Pope John Paul II at the start of his week-long tour of Latin America. The festive atmosphere was marred by what government officials said was an attempt to kill President Alvaro Arzu on Sunday. Mr Arzu and his wife Patricia escaped unhurt when a pickup truck appeared to try to ram them as they rode home. Security men shot and killed the truck driver. The Pope, in a half-hour news conference relayed by satellite phone from his chartered jet, spoke of the region's gaping divide between a rich elite and the poor masses. "The Church's role is to ask for social justice," he said. He said he would promote equal rights for Amerindians. Guatemala's majority Maya Indian population converted to Christianity after the Spanish conquest. The Guatemalan faithful rose at dawn to decorate the miles of streets that the Pope was to travel in his armoured popemobile. The interior minister, Rodolfo Mendoza, said what he called the "assassination attempt" on the president would not affect the pope's visit. "We hope it won't be more than an isolated incident." — Reuter.

#### Earthquakes to blame for Old Faithful's new unpredictability

OLD FAITHFUL isn't any more. The world's most famous geyser, in Yellowstone National Park, is becoming irregular, writes Ian Katz in New York. Old Faithful, which used to blast a column of superheated water 125ft into the air "every hour on the hour" now erupts about every 77 minutes, and with less predictability than in the 1970s. Experts blame a series of minor earthquakes in the area which may have interfered with the channels directing pressurised hot water up to the silica cone. They also speculate that Old Faithful may have become partially blocked by thousands of items thrown in by visitors over the years, including underwear, furniture, beer cans, coins and rifle shells.

#### German police 'xenophobic'

Amnesty International said yesterday it had received many reports in the last 10 months of German police beating up detained foreigners. It demanded an investigation. Klaus Steffenhagen, deputy chief of the German police union, conceded there had been isolated instances of police mistreating foreigners but said German police "are clearly not xenophobic" and that Amnesty was exaggerating the problem. — AP.

#### Hostages at risk

Experts voiced concern yesterday about the health of 13 hostages — including four Britons — held by rebels in Brian Jaya, Indonesia, as they entered their fifth week in captivity. — Reuter.

#### Island dispute

Nigerian and Cameroonian troops fought on disputed islands in the Bakassi peninsula at the weekend and several were killed on both sides, a Nigerian officer said. He said the Cameroonians started the fighting but were pushed back from positions they occupied. — Reuter.

#### Police car racket

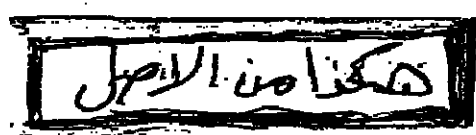
Chinese police have seized 105 fake police cars which had wreaked havoc on roads in Guangdong province, the Beijing-funded China News Agency said yesterday. Police arrested 49 people in raids on seven centres making or selling fake police car licence plates. — Reuter.

#### Greece snubs US envoy

THE Greek government, facing public indignation at Washington's role in defusing the row with Turkey over a disputed Aegean island, yesterday forced the US assistant secretary of state, Richard Holbrooke, to cancel his forthcoming visit, writes Helena Smith in Athens. After a marathon cabinet meeting, the prime minister, Costas Simitis, said: "The programme that Holbrooke proposed does not fit in with the government's schedule. So the visit is not possible." He has been attacked for accepting a US-brokered compromise over the uninhabited island. Yesterday, tensions erupted after a near-collision between a Greek coast guard boat and a Turkish warship.

#### Garry says he thinks his lounge is 'Orrible. Orrible! There's a lotter stonework at one end. There's some statuettes of Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy, my heroes.' And he falls about laughing again.

Mr Garry says he thinks his lounge is "Orrible. Orrible! There's a lotter stonework at one end. There's some statuettes of Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy, my heroes." And he falls about laughing again. — page 7





# US and Europe haggle over reconstruction bill Dispute threatens funds for Bosnia

Larry Elliott in Davos

**A** DISPUTE between the United States and Europe over funding for the \$5.1 billion (£3.3 billion) package to rebuild the Bosnian economy threatens to delay the massive reconstruction effort, it emerged last night.

With the World Bank stressing that work on rebuilding infrastructure, schools and hospitals needed to get under way immediately, US and European Union officials admitted they were still haggling over the shares of the bill.

Richard Holbrooke, US assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs, said in Davos yesterday: "It is certainly true that in an era of budgetary constraint all of us are a bit troubled about the amount of aid all of us are going to have to contribute."

Just over \$500 million has been found to "jump-start" the Bosnian economy, but the World Bank says this will only be enough for the first three months of 1996.

It is putting pressure on donor governments — who are expected to find 90 per cent of the \$5.1 billion — to settle their differences before a special conference in April, which will discuss a full blueprint for the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Officials are working on a fast-track programme for Bosnia-Herzegovina to join the World Bank in the spring, stressing that implementing the \$5.1 billion package would be far cheaper than continued humanitarian aid.

Christine Wallich, acting director of the World Bank's central European division, said last night: "The civilian

## Britain angry at Bildt delay

**BRITAIN** is angry that the United States has made no contribution to the operation of Carl Bildt, overseeing civilian peace implementation in Bosnia, says *the Economist*.

Foreign Office officials said yesterday that the European Union had paid half of the 20 million euros slated for his budget but had not received the 20-25 per cent pledged by the US at last December's London conference.

The complaint follows US criticism of Mr Bildt's progress and a sense that Washington is too focussed on the military side of the settlement.

effort needs to be as fast as the military effort. There is no time to lose."

The Bank believes the donor package is vital to convince the people of Bosnia that the peace process is working and to encourage the next stage of the reconstruction process — an influx of private-sector money.

The need for the private sector to move into Bosnia has been one of the main themes of the World Economic Forum in Davos, and World Bank president Jim Wolfensohn has been lobbying hard among the businessmen gathered for the week of discussions.

Ms Wallich said she remained confident that the funding row would eventually be settled. "Donor countries are aware that we need to change the psychology, that Bosnians need to see people with jobs, people who are

healthier, people with water and heat. They are also aware that unless these things happen, who knows what will happen at the end of the year [when NATO troops are due to withdraw]."

She said the international community had made a huge humanitarian contribution to Bosnia, but that this now had to be converted into reconstruction: "Ten dollars spent on seeds saves \$100 of food imports."

Mr Holbrooke will discuss Bosnian funding on his current tour of eastern, central and western European capitals. He said the US was fully committed to the reconstruction effort, but added: "We want the Europeans to contribute more and they want us to contribute more."

One particular problem for the Clinton administration is the difficulty of getting an aid package through the Republican-dominated Congress.

The international community's High Representative, Carl Bildt, denied that Europe's contribution would depend on the amount secured from the US. "The US Congress is one of the issues involved, but it is not the only one. Money is available from the European Commission but it may not be all the money that is needed."

Shrugging off criticism of his performance as High Representative, Mr Bildt said: "This is a global concern. We are expecting Japan and the Islamic countries to make a full contribution."

Ms Wallich said the World Bank was urging the Paris Club of creditor countries to be generous about Bosnia's debt. "I hope they will take a sympathetic view of the exceptional circumstances."

Davos Notebook, page 11



Defiant protest... Armed Chechens shout anti-Russian slogans from the top of a lorry during a rally on Saturday in Tsotsin-Yurt, 22 miles south of the Chechen capital Grozny. Russian armoured vehicles advanced on the former presidential palace in Grozny yesterday after more than 1,000 supporters of the rebel Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudaev gathered for the second day to demand the withdrawal of Russian troops

## New boss of news agency 'a threat to freedom'

Paul Webster in Paris

**FRENCH** newspapers expressed concern yesterday at government interference in the appointment of a new chairman for the state-subsidised Agence France Presse (AFP), the world's third-biggest news agency after Reuters and AP.

Liberation said the appointment of Jean Miot, aged 55, chairman of the board at the rightwing *Le Figaro* newspaper, would harm the credibility and independence of an agency often seen as France's official voice. Liberation claimed AFP's reputation had been stained by the "disastrous behaviour" of the prime minister, Alain Juppé, who played an active part in Mr Miot's nomination.

*Le Monde* pointed out that nine government MPs contributed to *Le Figaro* and recalled that President Jacques Chirac had cast doubt on the agency's independence last year by predicting that Mr Miot would become head of AFP — before the job was available.

The Gaullist-led government has already intervened in the appointment of state-owned radio and television chiefs, arousing criticism that it is determined to take control of the main media outlets to ensure more favourable coverage.

High-level dissatisfaction has been expressed at the way AFP reported allegations of corruption against the prime minister in connection with cut-price rents for council flats for him and his family.

The journalists' trade union, the Syndicat AFP's 1,100 staff to be "vigilant" for possible plans to change the statute guaranteeing its independence.

Mr Miot, chairman of the national newspaper federation, was strongly criticised by other unions, including the Socialist-led CDT, which said AFP's independence was being sold off.

## Poles plan to dig up skeletons

**A bill to trace informers is causing alarm, writes Matthew Brzezinski**

**P**OLAND, on the heels of the spying scandal which forced the prime minister, Jozef Oleksy, to step down amid allegations that he worked for Russian intelligence, has become the latest east European country planning to delve into its past and shake skeletons from its collective cupboard.

Few will have forgotten the wave of divorces in East Germany when, after 1989, it was disclosed that even spouses had informed on one another to the Stasi, or the trauma surrounding the former Czech dissident Jan Kavan, disgraced for allegedly co-operating with communist security forces.

But Warsaw's project to dip into its communist past has a twist. The bill's author is the new president, Aleksander Kwasniewski, a former communist. Not surprisingly, thousands of Poles are anxiously looking over their shoulders. But Mr Kwasniewski's party colleagues do not appear to be losing any sleep over the measure.

"The president's project is a sword that only cuts one way," said Professor Andrzej Paczkowski, a political scientist. "It appears primarily to target former dissidents." It is feared vengeful SB agents may have doctored documents to incriminate dissidents as the communist regime fell.

Under the plan, informers who worked for the SB, the communist-era secret police, can be forced out of public office. But former bona fide agents would continue to operate.

Former members of the nomenklatura would also be absolved.

Former communists, who now control parliament and the government, and their allies from the old secret police had little to fear, Prof Paczkowski said. The screening of people for co-operating with the old secret police without "recommutation" had no logic. "It's at best a half-measure."

At the headquarters of the Freedom Union, the opposition party that groups former Solidarity activists, consternation over the bill is running high. "It's not a screening process," complained Gwidon Wujcik, an MP. "It serves to cleanse ex-communists." Mr Wujcik said that his party would be hit hard by the bill if approved by parliament.

Another concern is the authenticity of the estimated 3 million files the secret police kept that would form the basis for screening. "The most damaging files were destroyed as the Communist regime collapsed. It is thought likely that many files were doctored to incriminate dissidents by bitter SB agents and that innocent Poles may have been added to lists of informants by ambitious agents seeking to impress bosses."

Doctors of files brought down the government of the anti-communist prime minister, Jan Olszewski, in 1992, when he started screening innocent MPs were named as informants and Mr Olszewski had to resign because of the mistakes.

Ironically, the man chosen to replace Mr Oleksy, the ex-communist Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, was named in 1992 as an informant. Under the criteria of the new screening process, however, he would also be absolved of any wrongdoing.

But even those found guilty of co-operating with the SB could keep their jobs if superiors do not want to sack them — a measure that could further protect former communists holding top posts.

Parliament is to vote on the bill later this month.

## Chernobyl effects 'not properly studied'

David Hearst in Tula

**M**ILLIONS of victims of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster are not getting the compensation due to them because the Russian government cannot afford it.

In the Tulskaia region south of Moscow, one of several Russian regions affected by the radioactive fallout, victims have not received their monthly remittance since last August.

The payments have always been controversial. Some scientists believe they are a political gesture rather than a reflection of environmental damage caused and the risk of living in the affected areas. Yesterday a leading Russian specialist on radioactive fallout, Leonid Ilyin, said in Moscow that Russia and the international community had lost a historic chance to monitor the medical effects of the incident.

He said the people who had suffered most were the liquidators: military reservists who were sent into the shut-

## Cracked sarcophagus threatens fallout replay

**A**LMOST ten years after the Chernobyl nuclear station exploded, restrictions on the sale of lambs from contaminated British farmland 1,500 miles away are slowly being removed, *David Fairhall writes*.

But by the time the ban is finally lifted, according to a new study by Adi Roche, director of The Chernobyl Children's Project, the concrete sarcophagus around

tered reactor to shovel highly radioactive debris from the roofs and surrounding buildings. In the first three critical months about 10,000 of them were used.

"None of these men was registered by name. None was checked on a regular basis, using standardised methodology. They all went back to their homes and were registered with the local medical authorities."

No one could say with certainty how much radiation

each man suffered, because the method of determining the levels was so imprecise.

Radiation readings were averaged and on this figure the men were allowed to work in the area — ranging from two minutes in the most dangerous to 10 minutes in the less dangerous — was based.

The only way to "reconstruct" each man's dose was an elaborate and expensive test on a sample of tooth enamel.

In 1990 Prof Ilyin, a member of the main committee of the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP), prepared a national plan to monitor the men who decontaminated reactor unit number four of Chernobyl. It was ruled out on grounds of cost: 500 million roubles.

Prof Ilyin, who published an updated version of his book Chernobyl: Myth and Reality yesterday, said: "The operation on Chernobyl was called 'The Liquidation of the

Consequences of the Chernobyl Accident. Even the title was a mistake. You can not liquidate its consequences, you can only weaken them. Nothing similar had ever happened before. For 10 days radioactive material was being thrown out into the atmosphere."

Eight million people in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus were declared to have lived in zones affected by the catastrophe. But, Prof Ilyin said, no real scientific study was conducted to see how they were affected and what by.

He maintains, controversially, that many of the effects noticed in cattle in these regions were caused by the overuse of fertilisers rather than radioactive fallout.

The liquidators usually meet in their home towns on the anniversary of the disaster. Although the government has frequently promised to pay their invalidity pensions on time, and give them flats, they regard themselves as the forgotten heroes of the disaster, many still paying with their lives.

## Spanish youth welcomes pin-striped challenger to 'old, corrupt' Socialists

**Voters too young to remember Franco warm to an uncharismatic rightwing leader, writes Adela Gooch in Madrid**

**W**HEN Felipe Gonzalez, Spain's veteran Socialist prime minister, visited Madrid law faculty the students jeered "liar and thief". When José María Aznar, leader of the conservative opposition, came to call they gave him a rousing ovation.

The response reflects a shift that will almost certainly propel Mr Aznar's Popular Party (PP) into office in the general election on March 3. He is making a strong attempt to win an all-out majority, to govern unhampered by Catalan and Basque nationalists who would otherwise hold the balance of power.

The polls give him about 40 per cent of the vote; the Socialists slightly more than 30 per cent; and the United Left (IU), or former communists, 12 per cent.

Spanish youth, the under-25s, who include about a million first time voters, are a critical, possibly decisive, constituency with firm views. Those on the centre-right support the PP; those on the left, the IU. The Socialists barely get a look in.

"They have nothing new to say," María Martínez, a student lawyer, aged 20, says. "They're old and corrupt. The country needs a real overhaul."

Both Mr González and Mr Aznar are lawyers. The simi-

larities stop there. In his corduroy jacket-wearing youth Mr González, now aged 53, aroused a passionate following. Mr Aznar, aged 42, a sober, pin-stripe-suited former tax inspector, provokes a cautious response. He is wooing voters with a tough prescription: financial austerity and administrative integrity after 13 years of spendthrift, dishonest Socialist rule.

Despite his self-professed lack of charisma, the young warm to him. Referring to Mr González's vaulted powers of seduction, he says: "Spain has had enough of it."

"He seems a more decent bloke than González. It's time for a change," says Eva Robles, aged 21, a student at Madrid's catering and tourism college, where training for a job in Spain's biggest earning industry begins at the age of 14.

Many PP policies are aimed at the young, including a proposal to reduce compulsory military service from nine months to six. Both parties make job creation a priority.

Spain has one of the highest general unemployment rates in Europe, at more than 20 per cent. The figure is double that for the under-25s. The Socialists propose sharing out the work available. Mr Aznar promises to activate the job market by gradually cutting taxes, improving



José María Aznar: Former tax inspector bound for office

professional training and making it easier to hire and sack workers. The young, less concerned than other groups by his claim to be able to do this without cutting welfare spending, approve.

"I think with Aznar there'll be more work and the conditions will be better," Jaime Martínez, a trainee hotel manager, says.

The PP, presenting itself as a centre party to avoid links with the right's fascist past, is moderately so for some tastes. "We should make it much harder to obtain an abortion," says María Meiras, a law student in yuppie garb. "You can't do that," her friend Santiago objects. "You alienate centrists."

Those aged over 50, who manned the barricades against General Franco and formed the backbone of Socialist support, often appear exasperated by their more moderate descendants.

But it is a credit to them that younger Spaniards should take democracy for granted rather than treating it with the circumspection and occasional abuse reserved for an unfamiliar toy.

In the law faculty, a bunch of students in leather and jeans sit cross-legged on the floor. "Of course, we worry about politics," Raúl, aged 19, says. "We're lawyers, we think about these issues." Both he and his friend María José plan to vote for the IU. "They're the real Socialists,"

## Swedish men suffer surge in violence by women

Greg McIvor in Stockholm

**M**EN in Sweden are on the receiving end of an upsurge in violent assaults by their wives and girlfriends, according to figures published yesterday.

Some 300 men lodged official complaints last year after suffering domestic attacks by a growing incidence of violence by women against men, the Stockholm daily newspaper *Expressen* reported.

One complainant, Magnus Eriksson, aged 23, had launched criminal proceedings against his former girl-

friend after allegedly being physically battered while being ejected from the flat the couple shared.

"She hit me twice, hard in the face, and spat on me," he said. The woman, described as "older and athletic", then allegedly knocked him over and pinned him down. "She screamed as loud as she could in my left ear. I constantly hear a beeping noise in it now."

Mr Eriksson, who claims the injury has impaired his musical career, said not all men had muscles like Rambo or Arnold Schwarzenegger, and many felt embarrassed to report vio-

lence against them by women.

"I am not seeking revenge. But I must exercise the right that so few Swedish men in our land of equality choose to exercise," he said.

Sweden, with almost equal numbers of men and women in work, is renowned for its equality. But researchers say many male battery victims are too ashamed to report cases.

Mikael Rying, of the National Crime Prevention Board, said: "It is a bit like incest. Once you start to talk about it, more and more comes up to the surface."



**The tools for the job**

Education reform will inevitably cost money

HOW much joy would there be in football if correspondents and commentators permanently focused on the perennial strugglers at the bottom of division three: Lincoln City, Darlington, Northampton? Indeed, how much joy would there be if attention was confined to the losers in the premier league: Coventry, QPR and dare we say it, Manchester City? Football is joyful because winners get more attention than losers. Television producers vie with each other for the most attractive teams: Manchester United, Newcastle and perhaps the occasional London club. So three cheers for the Chief Inspector's annual report yesterday for including a list of 200 specially commended schools. Nursery, primary, and secondary schools were all included in this "testament to success". They are not just achieving good results but are doing so "in comparison to schools in similar circumstances". It is not just a leafy suburb list. The inner city is there too.

There is, as usual, a downside also. Ever since an earlier Chief Inspector lifted the curtain in 1988, media coverage has been dominated by the bad news: the one in three classes which were rated poor or unsatisfactory. This coverage is not just because of the media's carnivorous appetite. Children's futures are involved too. Millions of them. This year's report is not comparable to the late 1980 editions, but the findings have a familiar ring: one in three primary lessons and one in five in the early years of secondary education were rated as unsatisfactory. The gap between the good and the bad remains as wide as ever: "the most successful secondary schools achieve GCSE results twice as good as others in similar socio-economic circumstances and six times better than those achieved by the least successful in less favoured areas." Such disparities cannot be ignored by policy-makers, the profession

or the public. What the Chief Inspector's snapshot cannot capture is the process of change. Just as the *Flowden* reforms in the 1960s were already being introduced into primary schools before the Committee reported, so too the recommendations of the "three wise men" were already beginning to take hold even as their report was released in January, 1992. It is not just the inspectors but researchers who found there had been too big a move away from whole class learning in primary schools. But the research figures quoted by the Chief Inspector yesterday on primary learning settings (eight per cent in groups, 15 per cent in class and 77 per cent on their own) may already be shifting. We will have a better idea next year when the first returns of a new monitoring process on primaries will be available. But even the Chief Inspector acknowledges "an increasing willingness of teachers to review good practice".

Good schools need more than good teachers. There are two other crucial determinants: leadership and resources. The importance of head-teachers is now widely recognised with much more attention being paid to their training and the skills which they need. All heads have been given more freedom and more control over their budgets. What remains in dispute is the role of resources. The Education Secretary tries to dismiss its importance by pointing to schools which have succeeded despite their financial handicaps. That is not good enough. Yesterday's report refers to the "disturbing" shortage of books and equipment in some schools and the shortfall in accommodation affecting 1,000 secondary schools and 3,000 primaries. Then there is the under-funding of nursery education, which is crucial in raising primary standards. Simple maths dictate schools need more pennies and pounds.

**There is no quick fix in Bosnia**

The political means to peace still need to be worked out

US SECRETARY of State Warren Christopher will be back again. His trip to Sarajevo and Belgrade may have been judged a success but the hard part lies ahead. Superficially Mr Christopher's enterprise can be compared to his mediation in the Middle East: no one expects that to produce results in a hurry. In former Yugoslavia too, he is being cast as the firm but kindly "father figure". But there is a significant difference. The US has been nudging along a dialogue between Israel and Syria for the past five years as part of a broader long-term commitment to the region. Washington has only plunged in to the Balkan pool over the past year, previously it just dipped an inconsistent toe. Worse still, there is an implied cut-off date for effective intervention since the Clinton administration has made no secret of its desire to get out within the year.

Last week a leaked report from the White House, summarising the views of all the US intelligence agencies, took a pessimistic view of the future beyond 1996. It said that the former combatants would continue to share a deep mutual mistrust, seeking to achieve their fundamental goals while rejecting compromise. We would like to believe that this is over-gloomy. The Middle East has shown how the habit of reconciliation can grow over time when there are the minimum conditions for peace. But Bosnia is far less stable while at the same time its own peace process is much less flexible. The Dayton agree-

ment delivered the end — a fine federal structure on paper with any number of relevant appendices. But it left the political means to be worked out painfully on the ground. What has been achieved so far has been almost entirely in the military sphere. The rival factional armies have pulled back along nearly one thousand kilometres and have vacated whole regions which are being swapped between the Sarajevo-Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serb "entity." This achievement should not be belittled and there is a welcome determination of the Nato forces to act decisively. But the political agenda presents a long list of problems ahead. These include investigating war crimes and human rights issues, seeking to check the de facto spread of ethnic cleansing as territories are exchanged (let alone reverse its consequences), holding democratic elections within six to nine months, restoring law and order and establishing an effective police force, tackling the crisis presented by hundreds of thousands of displaced persons, and rebuilding the devastated infrastructure of the entire region.

It would be wiser not to lean exclusively on Mr Christopher. The European contributors to the Nato force quietly realise now that — whatever the imperatives of Mr Clinton's re-election campaign — they cannot pull out so fast from Bosnia. This in turn requires much greater diplomatic effort and more support for Carl Bildt in pursuing the civilian objectives of Dayton.

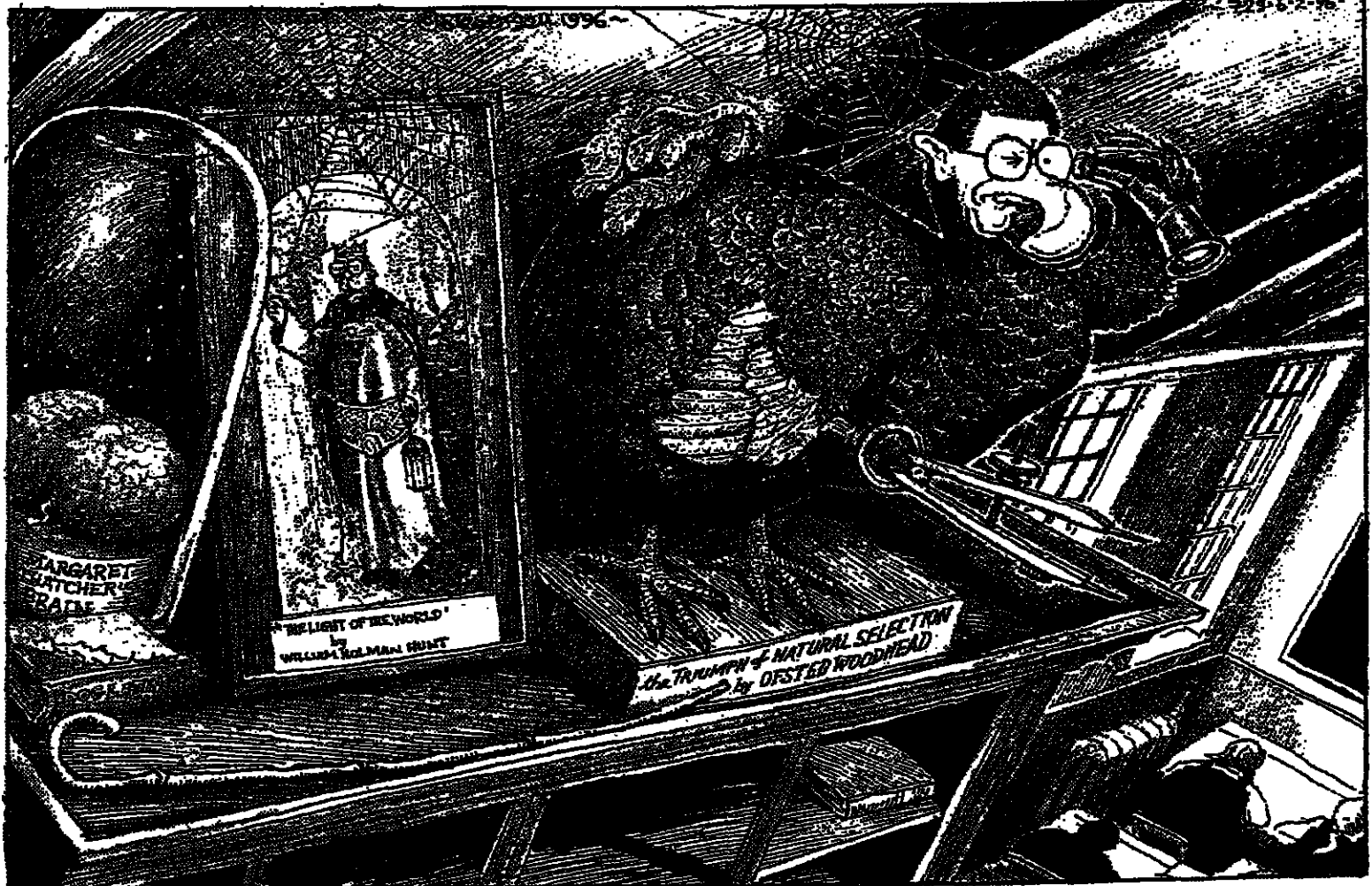
**Just add DNA to taste**

You say tomato, I say genetic nightmare

THE TOMATO was destined to become an early candidate for genetic engineering. Long before recent events caused it to be dubbed "Frankenstein's plant", it led a Jekyll and Hyde existence. For a start it's a fruit that thinks it is a vegetable: a native of South America yet was first eaten in Britain before finding horticultural perfection in Italy: it is harmless yet was thought during the 19th century to be poisonous. With a CV like that no wonder it feels confused. There is no doubt also that during the 20th century it has undergone a personality change. It simply doesn't taste as nice as it did decades ago.

Yesterday Sainsbury's and Safeway introduced what Tony Blair might call New Tomato — a puree made from tomatoes genetically modified by blocking out the action of an enzyme which rots the fruit. The initial reaction from a panel of trainee chefs assembled by

the Press Association was that it was a "hit". But this is only the first step towards what could be the next agricultural revolution. Crick and Watson didn't labour in their laboratories just to produce a modified sauce for hamburgers. Soon there will be genetically modified bananas, melons and caffeine-free coffee. If they don't meet consumer resistance then more and more of our food and drink will be affected by genetic engineering. There are grave potential dangers as the Genetics Forum warned yesterday. But there are also huge opportunities for enrichment. Most people will agree with the Consumers Association that, providing the products are properly tested, there is no reason why they should not be sold — as long as the consumer is given a choice. Who knows, one day they may even find a way for the tomato to have a sex change so it can become the fully fledged vegetable it clearly craves to be.



**Letters to the Editor**

**An economics tutorial**

**I**N LINE with the Guardian's view that a graduate tax is "the fairest way of repaying the benefits of university life", shouldn't everyone in the country who ever benefited now make repayments (Leader, February 3)?

At one time, a university degree was thought to enable the holder to earn a higher income and therefore pay more tax, which in itself is a way of repaying society. In addition to the greater contribution a graduate is, in principle, able to make. Isn't the underfunding of all services a consequence of Tory dogma: the divine right of the individual to keep as much of his own money as possible?

L.R. Armstrong,  
18 Stanley Avenue,  
Portsmouth PO3 6PN.

**T**HE need for an alternative to the current university funding system is undeniable. However, the conservative solution ignores the problems of those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. It also fails to mention the need for a repayment system which must necessarily be linked to income. These issues must be tackled if the economy is to retain talented people attracted to the "caring" professions which

are notoriously badly paid, yet require education to degree level.

Arun Arora,  
West Midlands NUS Area  
Convener 1994-5,  
144 Selly Park Road,  
Selly Park,  
Birmingham B29 7LE.

**I**T IS the new equivalent of the first cuckoo of spring: "Vice-chancellors propose top-up fees". Each year for about a decade, someone from their august ranks has made such a proposal.

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals should decide what education system they aspire to. They can continue to squeeze more students into the system without extra resources or they can tell the Government that expansion without additional funding has to stop. Or they can choose to abandon the principle of free tuition that has been a cherished hallmark of British higher education for many years.

Tim Walker,  
61 Ravenshaw Street,  
London NW6.

**T**HE most pressing question that is always asked when hopeful sixth-formers are being shown around university is not "How good is the course?", but "How much in debt will I be?" (swiftly followed by "Where's the Job Centre?"). With current proposals to abolish grants and make loans larger, the only people left taking degrees will be those lucky few whose loan will be paid off by mum and dad and people like myself who take every penny available and will think about the consequences later (I'm currently looking at around 25,000 by the time I finish).

It appears that the change in demography of students in recent years, from the elite few to the classless many, is only going to be a brief adventure for this country's institutions.

Ben Wheeler,  
Kim Tree Cottage,  
The Green,  
Frampton-on-Severn,  
Gloucestershire GL2 7EZ.

**I**WOULD suggest that those graduates who have successfully completed at least one year of postgraduate research have their tuition loans written off. This is because they will have generally carried out useful research work for little financial return.

Alexander Chablo,  
23 Gouliden Road,  
Manchester M20 4ZE.

**The royals' private lives, philosophically speaking**

**M**ARY Midgley (To do the decent thing, February 2) is quite right to highlight the tension between ideals and practices as "the elastic that pulls us forward". For most of us, steadfast adherence to high ethical principles frequently has no practical moral bearing: by deciding to leave one's car at home, or to refuse certain privileges for one's family, our solitary acts of self-sacrifice serve only to purify our moral consciences.

But senior public figures are in a different league. They have unprecedented power to confer on their private decisions a moral value by explaining their ideals to the rest of society and offering their conduct as an example. With unique access to mass means of communications, these people can transform purely symbolic acts of principle into exemplary moral behaviour which influences the conduct of others.

Our public figures are therefore hypocritical when they justify their self-interested actions with claims that they are those of "tens of thousands of parents up and down the country".

Finn Bowring,  
5 Ladysmith Avenue,  
Sheffield S7 1SF.

elects specifically to take part in the making of policy. They are politicians, in Holland, Scandinavia, Germany, Ireland and the UK. Monarchs/presidents are chosen to represent the state on formal occasions. Yet we alone among them keep the trappings of a full-blown aristocratic, even feudal, leadership after political powers have been stripped away. The difference here between form and substance is immense. Dr Midgley's "elastic" is near breaking-point.

David Heskeith,  
Lindisfarne,  
Northumberland Road,  
Tyne and Wear NE40 3PT.

**I**THINK I can answer Bel Mooney's question (Letters, February 1) about why journalists like Catherine Bennett hate the Prince of Wales so much, and so reflexively. It's not his chaotic and less-than-perfect personal life, but his open commitment to community, the environment, multi-cultural continuities, and the reality of soul or spirit.

Such things are deeply offensive and indeed personally threatening for the modernist unreligion of secularism, of which the great majority of journalists are devout members. In extreme cases, this takes the form of loathing anything that does not answer directly to the body's direct physical and emotional needs, and clinging to a sourceness of nationalism, materialism and jejune cynicism. Julie Burchill's crowning of Catherine Bennett (Letters, February 2), whose every column drips with the vinegar, perfectly makes my point. But the soul is like any other organ in at least one respect: it shrivels from disuse. Burchill ought to be able to understand that.

Patrick Curry,  
1 Redan Street,  
London W14 0AD.

**B**EL MOONEY has rightly risen in support of the royal family and of the decent values shared by the majority of the British population. The disagreeable tone of Julie Burchill's letter exposes the lie that violence is the chief common denominator of humanity in all its repulsive selfishness in an age in which (as Yeats put it) "the ceremony of innocence is drowned". Ours is certainly a less happy society due to the corruption of the cynical media's malevolent influence upon us all.

Hugh Berger,  
The National Forum Trust,  
34 Kensington Park Gardens,  
London W11 2QT.

**We do care**

**W**E AGREE with everything said about the new asylum law by the Bishop of Winchester. Democrats, we oppose these regulations with passion and a three-line whip in both Houses. If the authors of the letter can show us one act either of commission or omission by which we may have given the impression that our opposition to these regulations was anything less than total, we would be grateful if they could tell us so that we can correct this wrong impression.

Before doing so, we would be grateful if they could consult the Bishop of Ripon, who speaks for the bishops on this issue in the House of Lords, whose admirable contributions have been even worse reported than ours, and, being present throughout the Lords debate, can confirm everything in this letter.

Liz Lyane MP,  
David Aiton MP,  
Earl Russell,  
Baroness Williams,  
(Liberal Democrats in the House of Commons and House of Lords),  
Houses of Parliament,  
Westminster,  
London SW1A 0AA.

**Smoke screen**

**S**O ADRIAN ROGERS did not actually watch a blue movie (Labour delight as blue movie row gives star role to Tory, February 5) — he stayed outside and "worked the lights". Just as Bill Clinton smoked cannabis — "but did not inhale". How long before a politician admits to sleeping with a woman — "but did not insert"?

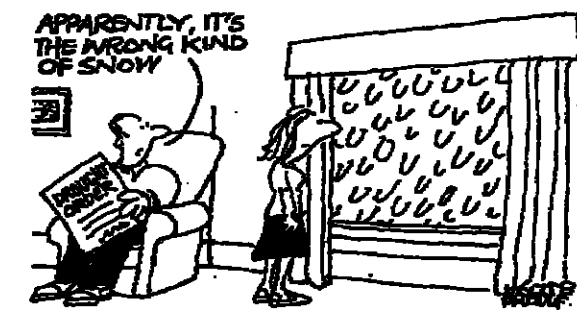
David Buckingham,  
24 Hill Close,  
Pennsylvania,  
Essex E24 6RG.

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David Buckingham,  
24 Hill Close,  
Pennsylvania,  
Essex E24 6RG.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a telephone number.



**Yorkshire Water's leaky logic**

**A**MAN in his seventies tells me that in years past, after a heavy snowfall, council workers would shovel the snow off the streets and on to lorries, then tip the loads into the River Don.

Ten inches of snow fall on Sheffield for a week, the pavements are covered with ice, and the roads narrowed by

piles of snow. Yorkshire Water announces that drought measures must apply, because reservoir levels are so low. And 20,000 people in Sheffield are jobless. Are these things connected?

Philip Mulliner,  
289 Abbeydale Road,  
Sheffield,  
S Yorkshire S7 1FJ.

**A brief lesson in Greek philosophy**

**T**HE totally avoidable conundrum described by Leonard Doyle (Academic uproar at banned book, February 2) could be a blow to freedom of expression, but not in Greece. In our country we deeply respect and live by the famous dictum: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

Freedom of speech is total in Greece, to such an extent that some people (thankfully different ones, at different times and on different issues) never cease complaining it is being abused. There is argument, often passionate, and refutation, often vehement — but never any violence.

The worst possible fate that could befall a Cambridge University Press book on an anthropological subject in Greece would be indifference, spiced perhaps with the odd verbal attack against it in the column of some obscure extremist publication. Intolerant voices do of course exist, as in most countries, but so far they have always dully failed to silence anyone. In Greece at least.

Elias Gounaris,  
Ambassador,  
Greek Embassy,  
1a Holland Park,  
London W11 3TP.

on CUP to suppress a book. In 1972, after two years' intensive work at CUP's request, I completed *The Politics of Medical Manpower*, a book dealing with conditions of work in the NHS. The NHS was at the time facing reforms under Sir Keith Joseph, and the nation now knows only too painfully how far that particular philosophy has led. The original reader applauded the manuscript and pronounced it ready for publication.

A second reader was immediately brought in and, at the instance of Anthony Wilson (who has now risen to Chief Executive), the book was summarily refused.

Through legal action I came to see CUP's internal file on the book, revealing the second reader as sending the MS to the Department of Health & Social Security, later adding the rider: "I think it is important that the author should not know that his book has been read by DHSS because it was read unofficially by a DHSS staff member who should remain anonymous."

Here was glaring evidence of DHSS interference leading to covert censorship and restriction of academic freedom. Now history is seemingly repeating itself.

Adrian Tibbitts,  
Haytons Bent, West Road,  
Shrewton, Salisbury,  
Wiltshire SP3 4EB.

**A Country Diary**

**C**HESHIRE: From the road, the path into the western woods led down the steep valley slope to the river bank and, once under the trees, I was out of the bitter easterly wind that had persisted for several days. It was still cold but at least I was sheltered from those cutting, icy blasts. A passer-by, being walked by his dog, paused long enough to tell me how quiet it was. "Everything is still asleep," he said, and so it appeared at first glance. Only the sound of running water broke the silence, as the river rushed over and around smooth-edged rocks that had been exposed as the water level dropped in the prolonged drought. But life was beginning to stir in the wood: in a secluded corner, hidden away from general view, straight and narrow, grey-green leaves of the wild daffodil had appeared, and were about two inches tall, still curled over, with tiny green buds brushing the soil, and leaves tightly

closed, some stems of dogs mercury had been tempted out into the open. But most noticeable were the few bright yellow hazel catkins that had fully opened. I hadn't noticed much bird activity until a nuthatch flew into a beech tree close by and started to call. Almost immediately, a nearby silver birch was alive with birds — a winter feeding flock on its rounds. Long-tailed tits made up most of the group, chattering to each other as they flitted through the branches, the remainder being a mixture of great and blue tits and two tiny goldcrests working hard to keep up with the rest of the group. I watched them searching each nook and cranny, pecking, hovering and hanging, but never still. Suddenly, without warning, they were off, moving quickly through the trees along the river bank and as I turned to head back to the road, the wood had gone quiet again.

J.M. THOMPSON

Handwritten signature: J.M. Thompson



Diary  
Matthew Norman

THE recent history of the Times is replete with triumphs (share-price bingo, becoming a Microsoft Freshnet, the entire editorship of Gentleman Charlie Wilson...)

FRANK the Lynne comes news of the most enticing national event since the ill-fated Splash and Flush Week. General Ernie Week starts on February 19, and the press release from Rachel begs us to call, 'should you require any facts and figures on California prunes'...

SA Y what you will about my old friend Harry Greenway, you must admire his timing. Last Friday, we learned how the cerebral MP for Ealing North stopped a road-safety plan written by all else because it would have added seconds to the drive to Parliament he prefers to a fatiguing three-minute walk...

NYET another political masterstroke, the Deputy Prime Minister advises small businesses to delay paying their debts as long as possible. The Diary looks forward to Mr Heseltine pushing through a refund (backdated to 1994, if you please) for those who paid huge fines for lateness in paying their VAT.

STEVEN Murray writes from Dumfries with an engaging tale about Prince Philip. This one was not taped off a phone-call in the orthodox manner, but witnessed by a driver in the Diplomatic Protection Branch. Some years ago, Philip was heading for the north of Scotland when his train broke down, stranding him on a remote and freezing station platform in the early hours. When the driver arrived to collect the Duke, he found a very nervous station man ager leading him towards his office, muttering: "Step this way, sir, and I shall entertain you until the train is fixed."

THE postponement of a railway privatisation because of alleged ticket fraud has given rise to a new platform announcement. Trains between London and Southend were cancelled on Sunday morning due to the wrong kind of thieves on the track.

I SHIPPED THE BONES FOR A CERTAINLY FRESH TOWN... (Small text block with a drawing of a person)

# Even common sense gets the veto

Commentary  
Hugo Young

HELMUT KOHL used to be the man John Major courted for his love. Now he is the man the Tory party loves to hate.

Kohl is a man of our time, but also of another time. He bestrides Europe today, but his idea of Europe was formed the day before yesterday.

Kohl is a man of our time, but also of another time. He bestrides Europe today, but his idea of Europe was formed the day before yesterday.

hensions, he is joyously rebuked by British Conservatives as some creature out of the ark. These ideas of Kohl's, drawing on the last war to make an omen for the next, are certainly unfashionable. They contest the achievement of the very institution into which he's seeking to breathe new life, the European Union.

This contrast is much more than an ironic paradox. Ridiculing Kohl's fear of war is a way of evading the real challenge he presents, which concerns a larger continent than the west of Europe, and invites the partners of the present EU to consider how they should address the many nationalisms seething on their borders.

But what has accompanied it? Not an effort to be constructive on other matters, but root-and-branch hostility to every initiative being floated before the IGC.

coming Intergovernmental Conference to review the Maastricht Treaty. It's a question the British Conservative Government has disqualified itself from answering. Not only does Britain have no solution, it has all but abdicated the right to be heard in any forum of constructive argument on the subject.

Consider his present stance. There's quite a lot to be said for his scepticism about economic and monetary union, his attitude of wait-and-see. Actually, everyone will wait and see. The British opt-out is not, in the real world, as unique a quarantine against infection as the Government pretends.

Chancellor Kohl so ridiculously draws attention. Maastricht created the idea of a common foreign and security policy, and wrote into law the availability of qualified majority voting to conduct it.

to every initiative being floated before the IGC. Prudent statesmanship would have ordained some conspicuous displays of belief in the EU project at other levels. In particular, it would suggest recognising a single proposition of vital interest to any country which is as keen as Britain is on the enlargement of "Europe": that the EU must further integrate, or die.

Ridiculing Kohl's fear of war is a way of evading the real challenge he presents. This contrast is much more than an ironic paradox. Ridiculing Kohl's fear of war is a way of evading the real challenge he presents, which concerns a larger continent than the west of Europe, and invites the partners of the present EU to consider how they should address the many nationalisms seething on their borders.

Chancellor Kohl so ridiculously draws attention. Maastricht created the idea of a common foreign and security policy, and wrote into law the availability of qualified majority voting to conduct it.



# Going overboard

As Hugo Young (above) condemns Britain's reaction to Helmut Kohl, Ian Traynor and Martin Kettle explain why he clings to his high-risk strategy

HELMUT Kohl's fondness for invoking the spectre of European hellfire has long been a staple of British establishment hackles. Should Europe spurn his vision of a federalised political union, the German Chancellor never tires of stressing the content is doomed to return to its ugly historical alter ego - nationalism, protectionism, destructive balance-of-power politics, resulting in trade wars and perhaps real wars.

dens of being German. The best concrete current example of this phenomenon is Kohl's undiletted commitment to trading in the Deutschmark, paramount and most cherished symbol of post-war Germany, in favour of the nebulous and unloved euro.

In his 14th year in power Kohl has no clear-cut successor able to command the authority and prestige that he brings to the table. Kohl's passion for it is unrequited by two out of three voters. This opposition he blithely blames on "misunderstandings and misperceptions".

called on Kohl to take the lead in ordering a delay. Yet for several domestic reasons, it looks extremely unlikely that Bonn will follow Hurd's advice, at least in public.

Second, in his commitment to the euro, Kohl finds himself between a rock and a hard place. Beyond Germany, the Maastricht terms for currency convergence are proving too tough for less resilient regimes, meaning that only a minority of EU members will pass the EMU test.

# Tessa stars in the revival of DIY

Tom Hodgkinson

ARE Peps the new rock 'n' roll? Only ask because there is a palpable sense in the air that we are moving towards a look-after-yourself economy, and a Personal Equity Plan, boring as it sounds, may be helpful.

It may be too late to hope that the White Paper the Government is now preparing to guard its back before the IGC, will contain any whiff of such elementary large-mindedness.

The Conservative Party is a body whose horizons, which once touched Budapest and Warsaw, now reach no further than the green, bloody benches in the House beside the Thames.

favour, compared with 32 per cent of Germans. The euro is not Kohl's only problem. Away from the tensions and quarrels over the euro, the bigger perspective sees Germany acutely ill-at-ease with the vision of itself as the principal external agent promoting economic and political stability in the former communist world on its eastern borders.

AS the Chancellor stressed at the weekend, Germany has its own reasons for being keener on European union than some others.

Help us not to be ourselves, runs the troubled subtext of German European policy. The us to the most like Ulysses, that we be not tempted to pursue our interests. Bind us at this year's Inter-Governmental Conference with a European common foreign and security policy (CFSP), by majority voting if necessary.

By instinct and inheritance, Germany remains fully signed up for the creation of a maximalist CFSP. Yet increasingly this too sounds like an old and unachievable agenda, repeated out of duty and for fear of the alternatives.

Yes, I'm interested in sponsoring an elderly person. Please tell me what I can do. Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms Address Postcode Tel. No. Send to: Mrs Helen Higgs, Adopt a Granny, Help the Aged, FREEPOST, London SE18 1JY. Or phone 0171 855 0885. Help the Aged Adopt a Granny Registered Charity No. 27876



Tom Hodgkinson

others as dealers. This might sound as if I were describing Britain as a nation of shopkeepers, but the reality is more exciting. When you start to see yourself as an individual dealer, rather than an employee, a consumer, a union devotee or an acolyte of socialism, the world starts to look a little clearer.

Across the Atlantic, Republican presidential election candidate Steven Forbes has even proposed the idea of a flat 17 per cent tax rate, an idea that essentially admits to the notion of practically no government at all.

The personal-finance industry has been quick to cash in, so to speak, on this cultural shift. Its adverts are starting to exploit our fears of less cushioning from government and employer. There are even signs that ads are attempting to reposition the industry, as they say in marketing, or to make money management cool, as the kids might have it. Which it is, in a way. Or at least could be. Or perhaps should be.

At the same time, younger people are beginning to realise that personal finance may not be as boring as it sounds.

She has no-one to turn to but you. Don't let her down.

For Naku, life is harsh. First and alone, she recently had to give up her work because of failing health. With no family to look after her, and no money, Naku can't afford the medicines she needs, or even a proper meal.

Yes, I'm interested in sponsoring an elderly person. Please tell me what I can do. Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms Address Postcode Tel. No. Send to: Mrs Helen Higgs, Adopt a Granny, Help the Aged, FREEPOST, London SE18 1JY. Or phone 0171 855 0885. Help the Aged Adopt a Granny Registered Charity No. 27876



Clive Bruton

# Closely observed brains

**D**R CLIVE Bruton, who has died from a heart attack aged 54, was an eminent neuro-pathologist and one of the leading figures in the pathology of psychiatric disease. He was also known for his research into boxing head injuries and Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease. As curator of the Corsellis Collection, which possesses more than 8,000 brains, he was in charge of the largest brain archive in the world.

Bruton was in many respects an archetypal East London boy made good. He never lost touch with his roots and his visits to Romford dog track provided a constant source of anecdotes which enlivened many a Neuropathological Society dinner.

After grammar school he trained at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London and began to specialise in neuropathology following a stint as a research registrar (1968-70) at the Royal Free Hospital, Essex, under the tutelage of Professor J. A. N. Corsellis. They pub-

lished *The Pathology Of The Brain* in 1969 and the future course of his research career was set. Following a brief period at the Institute of Psychiatry, Bruton returned with Professor Corsellis to Runwell Hospital in 1972 as assistant neuropathologist. The two embarked on a series of neuropathological studies including *The Aftermath Of Boxing* (1973), which resulted in world championship boxing matches being reduced from 15 to 12 rounds. They also started a collection of brain specimens from a wide variety of neurological and psychiatric disorders.

As a result of their eclectic, diligence and long-term support from the Medical Research Council, Bruton and Corsellis began a series of studies characterised by a willingness to tackle difficult or contentious areas of neuropathology. They produced the first comprehensive documentation of the punch-drunk syndrome in boxers, a seminal work which underpins recent epidemiological and molecular insights into the relationship between head in-

jury and Alzheimer's disease. They also worked on a thorough review of the relationship between pathology and prognosis in temporal lobe epilepsy (which formed the basis of Bruton's MD and became a much quoted Maudsley Monograph) and a large investigation of the neuropathological characteristics of schizophrenia.

Bruton's work on schizophrenia exemplifies his characteristic willingness to identify and tackle difficult problems. In the early 1970s schizophrenia was viewed as a functional psychiatric disorder and its roots were considered to lie in the dark earth of difficult interpersonal relationships. The phrase "Schizophrenia is the graveyard of neuropathology" aptly summed up the expert point of view.

Undaunted by this consensus, and buoyed by his insights into the relationships between temporal lobe epilepsy, pathology and psychosis, Bruton continued to collect material from schizophrenic patients and together with Dr Tim Crow,

investigated the neuropathology of this condition. Their 10-year study, published in 1987, had a profound effect on the field of psychiatry; for the first time changes in brain structure in schizophrenia were documented. Subsequent studies demonstrated that these changes were likely to be due to an abnormality in brain development. This demonstration of the organic basis of one of the most enigmatic psychiatric disorders laid the foundation for future research in the field and its importance is widely appreciated by researchers worldwide.

**T**HAT he had succeeded where more expensive and complex strategies had failed, caused Bruton much amusement. His ability to resist the pressure to conform endeared him to younger colleagues and his deep-seated confidence that his approach would be vindicated, coupled with a generosity of spirit, made him appreciated by fledgling biological psychiatrists.

His detailed and systematic study of rare and common psychiatric disorders anchored him to Runwell for over two decades but after the mid-seventies only on a part-time basis as he took up full-time general practice. Despite his workload he had a Falstaffian approach to life. He once explained a limp saying he had slipped off his high heels adding that he had been playing the game at the local pantomime.

Bruton was much in demand as a dining partner and raconteur. Discussions and disagreements were a constant and revolved around the meaning of recent studies and the best approaches to solving particular problems. The role and future of the Corsellis Collection was an ever-present preoccupation.

This collection named in honour of its founder has grown to be one of the largest archives of human brain tissue in the world and was facing an uncertain future following Professor Corsellis' death in 1984. Despite the ill-health, which led to his retirement from general prac-



Clive Bruton... helping to understand psychiatric disease

Gareth Roberts

Clive Bruton, neuropathologist, born September 18, 1941; died February 1, 1996



High point... the Seven Dwarfs' Heigh ho sequence for Disney was one of Culhane's early triumphs

Shamus Culhane

# Small steps on a fantastic journey

**F**ILM ANIMATOR Shamus Culhane, who has died aged 87, is immortalised in the history of cartoons for his Heigh ho sequence in Walt Disney's 1937 classic, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. But until the end of his life he retained a vibrant interest in the subject, enthusing quite recently about state-of-the-art computerised animation.

In his autobiography, *Talking Animals And Other People* (1986) he wrote: "I was a link with the primitive past, before sound, colour or tape. I had been permitted to live long enough to see and use the greatest tools for artists that were ever invented. I am convinced that computer animation will produce beautiful works of art — beautiful beyond our most fantastic dreams."

It must have been something like a fantastic dream when the six-year-old Culhane went with his father James, a public transport worker, to see *Gertie The Di-*

noсеur, made in 1909 by the New York Journal cartoonist Winsor McCay, and the first animated film to be shown as part of a routine cinema programme. He never forgot this experience.

Culhane had been born in Massachusetts but moved to Manhattan as a small boy. He began drawing as a child and won awards for his pictures at high school in Harlem. After a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art he decided to become an artist himself, although after his father left home when Shamus was 16, he had to abandon his studies to support the family.

Nonetheless, he managed to get into the animated film industry during his infancy. Through his best friend's brother, Walter Lantz, he got a job as an office boy for J. R. Bray, a newspaper cartoonist who became the first to make animated films distributed regularly to cinemas. In 1925, covering up for an animator too drunk to work, Culhane animated his first scene, a

monkey with a hot towel. His career was to span 62 years. Altogether he worked for 18 different studios, including his own, and he played an important part in Walt Disney's early full-length cartoon features. First came *Snow White* and her marching dwarfs, which film critics have singled out as the most beautifully drawn of that period. Then came *Pinochio* (1940), in which Culhane animated the fox and cat. At the same time he was also working for Disney's main rivals, Max and Dave Fleischer, who produced *Gulliver's Travels* (1939) and *Mr. Bug Goes To Town* (1941). The latter, despite a score by Hoagy Carmichael and Frank Loesser, was a box-office failure and the brothers split up.

Many cartoon characters familiar today owe their form to Culhane — among them *Krazy Kat*, *Betty Boop*, *Popeye*, *Disney's Pluto* ("the essence of dog" as Culhane described him) and *Woody Woodpecker*. The bird's ad-

ventures were developed in a series of shorts directed by Culhane in the 1940s for the cartoonist pioneer Walter Lantz, who had helped Culhane get his first job.

In a 1994 book, *The 50 Greatest Cartoons As Selected By 1,000 Animation Professionals*, his 1944 *Barber Of Seville* cartoon was chosen to illustrate his humour. In it, *Woody the Woodpecker* sings *Largo Al Factotum* from the Rossini opera with exaggerated miming to the large proportion of vowels to consonants in the original. As head of Paramount's cartoons in 1967, Culhane produced the *Mighty Thor* series for television, and later he co-wrote and produced a seventies' series of animated television specials on Noah's Ark.

Culhane tended to see the world through a cartoonist's eyes — once memorably describing President Richard Nixon's awkward physical style as "three frames out of sync." The artist himself, with his goatee, beret and horn-rimmed spectacles, was once memorably described by President Nixon as an Irish-American working class family lucky enough to be young in the early days of a wonderful medium.

Christopher Reed

Graham Webb, who is compiling *The Complete Cartoon Catalogue*, adds: "I corresponded with Culhane

Antonio

# Fire and flamenco

**A**NTONIO, who has died aged 74, was much the most famous Spanish dancer of his day. Born in Seville, Antonio Ruiz Soler (always known by his first name alone) increased the international audience for Spanish dance; his performances were unprecedented in artistry as well as in showmanship.

With his cousin Rosario (Yvonne Fanez Padilla), he formed a childhood partnership which he was six, she 10 — under the title *Los Chavillos Sevillanos*. They gave their first performance in Liège in 1928 and remained partners for the next 26 years. Antonio used to boast that he had supported his family from the age of eight. The pair finally split up, each to form a separate company, but reunited for big occasions — like seasons in London and New York.

Rosario was a fine dancer, musical, neat, fastidious, decoratively plump. But beyond question Antonio was the great attraction. In every sense the dominant partner. "This was one of his achievements: to restore male supremacy to Spanish dance. In the preceding period the great

ones had all been women — Argentina, Argentinita, Pilar Lopez. The balance in his performances with Rosario was very happy — her solos providing graceful interludes between his bursts of astonishing pyrotechnics. In duets, she was a pleasant, not too obtrusive foil to his brilliance.

Their first American tour was in 1940; they came to the Edinburgh Festival in 1960 and to London for the first of many times in 1951. They toured very widely. Many regretted the split with Rosario; the small canvas, just the pair of them, seemed right as a setting for Antonio's genius, making, as it did, next to no demands on elaborate, and superfluous, effects of production.

But his eye in 1952 was set on a company rather than a *pas de deux*, with a repertoire that demonstrated his production skills. He arranged colourful anthologies of local dances — his Galician suite, for instance. And these were the keenly awaited, tantalisingly infrequent, "spots" for the master himself, often with his comic solos and always with his Zapateado (flamenco's virtuosity of rhythmic

stamping) as the show's climax.

He began, also, to try his hand at veritable choreography, as distinct from "arranging" dances, adapting the traditional, relatively limited language of Spanish classicism to the sort of dramatic purposes obtained by classical ballet. But it never quite worked. He was no dab hand at actually inventing movements and anyway it was beyond the scope of Spanish dance. His versions of the *de Falla* ballets, *Love The Magician* and *The Three Corners Hat*, were jejune. (The only really good Spanish ballet remains Leonide Massine's *Three Corners Hat*, made for Diaghilev.)

Antonio's company, nonetheless, was a big international success. He was a magnificent and versatile technician of his country's many forms of dance. Above all, he had the looks and the personality — handsome, sexy, buoyant, charming.

James Kennedy

Antonio Ruiz Soler, Spanish dancer, born November 4, 1921; died February 5, 1996



Unprecedented artistry... Karsh's portrait of Antonio

## Death Notices

**BRIDGE**, Esther Wynne Brookstone, Trade Unionist, died 22nd aged 84, after a long illness. Buried at St. Andrew's Church, London NW10. Donations to The British Diabetic Association, 100, Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP. Friends and acquaintances invited to a service at 11.30am, Friday 8th February at 17th St. Baptist Church, 17th St. London W1P 0LP. In lieu of flowers, donations to the British Diabetic Association, 100, Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP.

**WALTON**, Madeline (nee Christie), on Thursday 2nd 1996, aged 85 years. The dearly loved wife of the late Alan Walton, who died 1981. Madeline was the mother of Carolyn and devoted wife of the late Ronald G. Walton, OBE. A service of thanksgiving will be held at the Church of St. Andrew, 17th St. London W1P 0LP, on Friday 8th February 1996 at 11.30am. Friends and acquaintances invited to whom all enquiries should be made to Mrs. M. Walton, 17th St. London W1P 0LP. Tel: 020 7 734 1216.

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Jackdaw



Overdue

IN 1833, Guglielmo Libri was exiled (from Italy) and moved to France. There a brilliant career opened before him. In 1833, he was naturalised a Frenchman and elected a member of the Institut de France. He was appointed Assistant Professor in the Sorbonne in 1834 (full Professor in 1840), Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur in 1837, secretary of a commission for the publication of a general catalogue of manuscripts in French libraries in 1842 and Professor in the Collège de France in the following year. All this time, Libri had been buying, selling and

stealing books. There was an early incident in Italy. He had been librarian of the Florentine Accademia del Georgofili in 1826 but resigned abruptly a year later. Three hundred volumes were found to be missing. The scandal was hushed up by his family. In France, as secretary of the commission to publish catalogues of manuscripts, he was given privileged access to many libraries. He worked unsupervised among the shelves, stayed after hours and had his meals brought in. He would arrive wrapped in a capacious Italian cloak, and warned the terrified librarians that he carried a stiletto for protection against the Carabini. The Bibliothèque de l'Observatoire allowed him to take home numerous files for study. Letters of Flamsteed and Gassendi, and 455 items from the correspondence of Hevelius, were not returned. The aged librarian of Carpentras was persuaded to let Libri exchange one of Crozier's copies of Cassini's *Il Cortesiano* and an uncut copy of the Aldine Theo-

critus of 1495 for ordinary copies of most editions. In 1847, after an unsuccessful approach to the British Museum, Libri sold his collection of 1,800 manuscripts to Bertram, fourth Earl of Ashburnham, for £8,000. The prize piece was a seventh-century Pentateuch with 42 miniatures, stolen from Tours. In June of the same year, a major sale of "la Bibliothèque de M. Libri" took place in Paris. It included a dazzling series of rare 16th century works of Italian literature — 51 had been stolen from the Bibliothèque Mazarienne. Meanwhile, rumours of Libri's fraudulent activities had begun to circulate. Boucly, the Procureur du Roi, made inquiries and submitted a report. When the July Monarchy fell, Libri was warned that the Boucly report was about to be published. He spent the night burning papers and packing 25,000 volumes for dispatch to England, where he himself fled the next day. Anthony Hobson, follows the trail of a "Scientist, patriot, scholar, journalist and thief"

in his *Times Literary Supplement* review of *The Life And Times Of Guglielmo Libri (Hilary Term)*, by P. Alessandrini, *Milano, Ruffo and Marco Mosseri*.

**News gloss**

- THE MAN WHO GAVE BIRTH
- MY MOTHER PAYS TO LOOK YOUNGER THAN ME
- WHO DOES YOUR PARTNER REALLY WANT TO SLEEP WITH?
- WOMEN WHO ELIMINATE THEIR EX-LOVERS
- A PROSTITUTE STOLE MY CHILD
- THE FUTURE FOR YOUR BODY

Cover lines from the February issue of *Marie Claire*, "The magazine for women of the world"

**Memory lapse**

WHEN I had everything in the world open to me... I made the same painting over and over and over. When I could invent any shape, I made the same shapes over and over. When I could use any colour, I would use the

same colour combinations over and over... [As a child] I had really severe learning disabilities so I wasn't going to be able to take the normal route. I grew up so dyslexic I couldn't memorise anything, including faces — which is rather funny. Somebody that I was just seen on the street is as familiar to me as somebody I used to live with. I have to keep reinforcing and seeing the face over and over and over at regular intervals to keep it in my brain. You can see where this could be problematic but visually informing. A strange ramification of this imparity is that it is much easier for me to remember something that is flat than something which is three-dimensional. If you move your head a quarter of an inch, it's a whole new image and I have to learn the image all over again... but if it's flat, I move my head and it doesn't really change. So I think that I was driven to work on something that wasn't going to change. I guess that's why I was probably more interested in scanning the faces of those I know

and love and committing them to memory that I was probably in anything else. The portrait painter Chuck Kozzello is interviewed in *Cover Magazine*, America's "Underground national".

**Uplifting**

HISTORY does not record whether Confucius ever considered the WonderBra. But today there's bad news from

the world of lingerie for Asian leaders who hope that Confucianism's stress on propriety will ward off the West's obsession with sex. Asia's growing class of affluent urban women is eager to flaunt its sexuality. And that has created a boom market for the racyest of G-string and skimpy push-up bras. The hottest market of all: stuffy Singapore. "It's a nanny land, with the government always telling you what to do," says Madelyn Lip, who promotes underwear in the region. "But they can't tell you what to do underneath. Under it all, women are rebellious... WonderBra, the brand that popularised the super push-up brassiere, next month will launch a special product line sized for the slim Asian body. "There's a strong desire to be sexy," says Dorothy Lau, a Hong Kong accountant. "People want to marry a good husband, and a push-up bra is part of the package to achieve that goal."

This is still a limited market. Most Asian women remain shy about their

bodies. In Seoul, according to a study by Japanese underwear manufacturer Wacoal, 82 per cent of women sleep with underpants and a top under their nighties. But advertising evidently can erode such conservatism. The study also suggests a direct relationship between the amount of racy ads and the dissatisfaction that can lead women to try to improve on nature in Tokyo, where 84 per cent of women said they're unhappy with their bodies, 48 per cent of those polled said they've worn more than four girdles. In Beijing, exposed to Western advertising for only a few years, 74 per cent of the women said they're happy with their bodies. Dorothy Elliott looks at Asia's discreet objects of desire for *Newsweek*.

Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail [jackdaw@guardian.co.uk](mailto:jackdaw@guardian.co.uk); fax 0171-713 4866; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER

Dan Glaister

Shells try to...

Shells end with Sea Platform

Fokke

S

Workers business

Money

Handwritten signature or text at the bottom of the page.



Financial Editor: Alex Brummer  
Telephone: 0171-239-9610  
Fax: 0171-833-4456

# Finance Guardian

## Land's end for Shell North Sea oil platform

SHELL announced yesterday that it would dismantle its Leman BK gas platform on land rather than dispose of the installation in the North Sea, writes Chris Barrie.

The plans — the first approved by the Government since the Brent Spar controversy — involve partially dismantling and shipping the 6,000-tonne steel platform ashore from its site 45 miles east of Lowestoft.

Shell said the Leman platform was simpler to decommission, smaller, and in shallower water than Brent Spar. It will put the £10 million contract out to tender shortly, with five UK firms front-runners to win the business. Greenpeace welcomed the decision to opt for onshore disposal.

Energy minister Tim Eggar said the Government would continue to review applications for decommissioning cases by case.

PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW LEATHAM



## Notebook

### We're ready for a Ugandan solution



Edited by Mark Milner

LAST week the government in the Seychelles announced a novel way to boost inward investment. Anybody prepared to stash away \$10 million (£6.5 million) on the sun-kissed island in the Indian Ocean would be exempt from prosecution, no questions asked.

Predictably, this has led to uproar in the world business community, and rightly so. But it illustrates what most of the delegates at the World Economic Forum know only too well — that globalisation has spawned an orgy of corruption.

On one panel at Davos, a Brazilian judge and a Russian businessman swapped stories of assassination bids, while the joke among Swiss policemen is that criminals no longer rob banks, they own them. They point out that the slopes of St Moritz are now the playground of the Russian mafia rather than minor British royals.

Chairing a panel on corruption, Jules Kroll, chairman of the eponymous personal security firm, said it was all very well having consciousness raising sessions, but direct action was now needed.

He noted that the desire for greater co-operation across borders was growing, and that rules were widely different. This may be more difficult than he thinks, since it is not only small islands but banks in developed countries that are prepared to turn a blind eye to illegality in these times of cut-throat competition.

Nor is it easy in the current climate to see his solution to the massive Russian problem do business, but not with the mafia — as anything more than wishful thinking.

But two things could be done. First, far more resources should be poured into policing in an attempt at a co-ordinated clean-up before it is too late. The American system, where a share of the proceeds from anti-drug smuggling operations go straight to the enforcement wing rather than into government coffers, should be more widespread. Second, the West should seize the offer from Uganda that debt forgiveness should be linked to a 20-year audit of the government books. In a world where incentive structures are everything, that would be the best possible reason to stay clean.

The trick that Vodafone and Cellnet have to pull off is to woo existing customers away from the analogue system to the technologically more advanced digital system, even though equipment for the latter is more expensive. Both Cellnet and Vodafone already have digital systems, but to achieve a significant switch in the balance between analogue and digital users in favour of the latter would mean scaling back the analogue network long before it had reached the end of its useful life. Timing will be everything.

Still they can always ask Prince Philip to help with the advertising. One of digital's greatest strengths is the security it offers from electronic eavesdroppers.

## Fokker fallout

AS FOKKER plays the sick man of Europe's aircraft industry, the question is whether, if British Aerospace is to play a role in the unfolding crisis, it should be that of the Dutch company's doctor or its heir. On the

# Fokker rescue link hits BAe

Mark Milner European Business Editor

SHARES in British Aerospace fell sharply yesterday after it emerged as a possible rescuer for ailing Dutch plane maker Fokker.

BAe confirmed that it had held talks alongside its partners in the regional jet sales and marketing venture Aero International (Regional).

It is unclear, however, whether the AIR partners, which also include France's Aerospatiale and Italy's Alenia, are among the five front-runners with which Fokker says it is in serious talks about a rescue bid with its administrators.

News of a possible tie-up between BAe and Fokker, which had to seek protection from its creditors last month, was enough to send the British company's share price down 24p to 875p.

BAe was giving little away yesterday. A spokesman for

the group said: "We are monitoring the situation. There have been contacts. We need to know what is going on in the regional aircraft market." Aerospatiale was equally non-committal. A spokesman said: "The partners in AIR have an interest in the Fokker situation. We are studying it but no decisions have been made yet."

A Fokker spokesman would confirm only that the South Korean company, Samsung, was one of the five "serious" contenders. He refused to comment on whether or not BAe or Aerospatiale were among the leading group.

However, Fokker is clearly keen to keep the company together as a single aircraft manufacturing entity rather than seeing itself broken up into what one executive described yesterday as "bits and pieces". That might prove difficult if BAe and Aerospatiale, which make rival products, were to become involved in a rescue operation.

Another possible suitor for Fokker is the Canadian company Bombardier, the owner of Belfast-based Short Brothers, where hundreds of jobs could be lost if Fokker were to fold.

Shorts has already issued

formal notices of possible job losses covering up to 1,500 people and yesterday Baroness Denton, from the Northern Ireland Office, held talks over the situation at Fokker with Dutch officials in the Hague.

Bombardier said yesterday it had agreed to hold talks with Fokker, but it did not make clear whether the negotiations were confined to Short's role as a supplier to the Dutch group or whether the Canadian group was interested in Fokker itself.

Fokker's future was thrown into the balance last month when its controlling share-

holder, Daimler-Benz, refused to provide further financial support for the loss-making Dutch company.

That forced Fokker to apply to the courts for protection from its creditors and the Dutch government, which remains a shareholder, threw the company a £146 million lifeline through a combination of loans and advance payments on aircraft orders which are providing the company with the funds to keep production running for several weeks.

Fokker chairman Ben van Schaik said yesterday that he was more optimistic about the future of the company than he had been a week ago. "One week ago we were not in talks and we didn't even have the bridge financing and that is an important hurdle," he said.

Daimler-Benz chairman Juergen Schrempp said yesterday that Airbus Industrie, the big jet consortium, made up of Daimler-Benz Aerospace, BAe, Aerospatiale and Casa, needs a "common" identity and a "management with bottom-line responsibility". The current structure, he said, was one in which "managers have no role".

also contributed to January's poor performance, with Japanese tourist traffic to Europe particularly badly hit.

Overall, the figures took nine-month profits to a record £364 million, up 84.5 per cent, while BA also broke records for passengers carried and percentage of seats sold.

Sir Colin said: "Business prospects remain encourag-

ing — a record profit for the year is anticipated and we expect to continue our programme of performance improvements. City analysts were less optimistic, however, warning that BA's costs had risen sharply in recent weeks. But Mike Powell of NatWest Securities said BA's problems were largely short-term.

marked down their full-year profit forecasts and the share price fell 19p to 502p. BA said passenger figures and forward bookings made in January were disappointing due to adverse conditions in January, writes Ian King.

Despite an insistence by the chairman, Sir Colin Marshall, that prospects remained "favourable", analysts

British Airways announced a 30 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for the last three months of 1995 yesterday but failed to meet City expectations, partly because of adverse conditions in January, writes Ian King.

Despite an insistence by the chairman, Sir Colin Marshall, that prospects remained "favourable", analysts

## Workers of world warn business of backlash

Larry Elliott in Davos

LEADERS of the world's trade unions pledged yesterday to fight any attempts to drive down working standards and warned business of an imminent public backlash against the unemployment and inequality caused by globalisation.

Stressing the need to examine the social impact of economic liberalisation, unions made it clear that they rejected calls by Bundesbank president Hans Tietmeyer and Bank of France president Jean-Claude Trichet for greater labour market flexibility in Europe as one-sided.

"We anticipate a very difficult time if an attempt is made to reduce the living standards of employees," said Philip Jennings, general secretary of FIET, which represents 450 unions from 120 countries.

Mr Jennings was leading a group of union leaders to the World Economic Forum in Davos in order to lobby businessmen and politicians about the plight of the 750 million people around the world who were unemployed or underemployed.

"You can't leave the destinies of working people in the hands of a few unelected central bankers. I fear there will be a backlash if people are going to get lower wages and higher unemployment as part of this process."

Mr Jennings added that the reaction against "social Darwinism" could take the form of increased nationalism, xenophobia or greater protectionism.

The growing strength of union companies had left a vacuum in governance, and it was

vital that minimum standards were used as the basis of a relationship between employers and workers. He added that the single currency project posed a possible additional threat to European workers. "If you take away the ability of a country to make an external movement in their currency to improve competitiveness that will mean wage earners have to take the flak. There has to be a social project to run alongside monetary union."

Bill Jordan, general secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, said the 127 million members of his organisation were being affected by the massive problems of "world poverty, unemployment and social exclusion" in a way that was unacceptable.

Both Mr Jordan and Mr Jennings said organised labour had proved its willingness to promote employment, citing the part played by German unions in the recent job creation package.

## BAT covered up nicotine danger, says ex-employee

Mark Tran in New York and Pauline Springgett

BAT industries, the tobacco and financial services conglomerate, has been accused by a former employee on prime-time US television of covering up the addictive nature of nicotine.

The allegation, heard by millions of viewers, is the latest assault on the credibility of the tobacco industry. It was made on the CBS programme 60 Minutes by Jeffrey Wigand, former research director at the BAT subsidiary Brown & Williamson.

Michael Moore, an attorney-general for Mississippi, told the programme that Mr Wigand was planning to testify in a lawsuit that the company knew for decades that tobacco was addictive. Mr Wigand is the most important tobacco official to have turned against the industry. A BAT spokesman said the lawsuit was in its early stages. "We don't expect it to

succeed," he said. He added that BAT was suing Mr Wigand in a separate lawsuit, alleging "fraud, theft and breach of contract when we believe the full story about him will emerge. We reckon that he will not turn out to be a credible witness and we look forward to cross-examining him."

CBS backed down three months ago from airing the Wigand interview amid fears of a lawsuit. Mr Wigand alleges that research on a safer cigarette was dropped for fear it would clearly expose every other product as unsafe.

Mr Wigand also said that BAT executives had long been aware that nicotine was addictive and that Thomas Sandefur, chairman and chief executive officer, perjured himself in congressional testimony when he denied this.

Mr Wigand, who said he had received death threats, also alleged that BAT did not take enough care over the use of nicotine, a carcinogenic and an ingredient used in rat poison. Cotnam was used in pipe tobacco because removing it "would hurt sales", Mr Wigand said. B&W has since removed cotnam.

Mississippi's lawsuit is seeking to force tobacco companies to pay for the cost of smoking-related issues. Mr Moore said that Mr Wigand's testimony was "going to be devastating to the tobacco industry. They (tobacco executives) have perpetrated the biggest fraud to the American public in history. They have lied for years, and years and years and years."

The states of Minnesota and Florida are also suing the industry for reimbursements, and Mr Wigand is the key witness in all three state suits.

Mr Wigand, who has a doctorate in biochemistry and endocrinology, was head of B&W research from January 1989 until March 1993. 60 Minutes included denials by the company as well as details of a B&W campaign to portray Mr Wigand as a liar.

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## Money Tips

A new book reveals valuable money tips based on the latest investment, tax and savings information. Here are a few tips covered in this Complete Handbook of Money Tips:

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## Gold finger points to 'rogue'

Dan Atkinson and Jan Rocha in Sao Paulo

RUMOURS that a Nick Leeson-style dealer, based in Brazil, has been responsible for a surge in gold prices have gained credence among international decision-makers at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Suggestions that a central-bank trader in South America has found himself short of billion have been around since before Christmas, but recent events have added force to the gossip.

In New York, bullion dealers are reported to have abandoned their habit

of secrecy and are comparing notes, convinced the official figures for gold dealings do not add up. One London broker said: "The whole thing remains shrouded in secrecy and is either a potential fireball or a damp squib."

Joubert Furtsdo, a senior Brazilian central bank official, said: "The rumours are laughable. We are not preoccupied by the recent price movements."

Until now, the rumour that a Latin American central bank — finding itself short of gold to fill speculative positions — has been behind the price surge from some \$340 (\$225) a Troy ounce before Christmas to

\$414.5 last night have tended to be dismissed by market professionals. But market talk has continued, and the announcement on Thursday that Brazil's state-owned company, Vale do Rio Doce, had discovered what would be the biggest gold mine in South America, may fuel gossip.

Normally, this would be seen as simple good news, but the timing of the announcement will cause suspicion should Banco Central, the reserve bank, or state-owned Banco do Brasil, prove to be short of billion. The discovery would have the welcome effect of holding down world prices and reassuring cred-



## 850 jobs go as Amstrad and Scottish Widows wield axe

Pauline Springgett and Tony May

MORE than 800 job losses were announced last night by insurer Scottish Widows and computer group Amstrad.

Scottish Widows is axing 700 jobs over the next year as part of a streamlining and centralisation operation. A spokesman said the move was triggered by the increasing competitiveness of the life assurance industry. By the end of 2000, 500 and 600 jobs will go at the company's Edinburgh head office, where there are presently 2,200 staff.

Scottish Widows said it hoped job losses could be achieved by retirement, routine departures and a voluntary redundancy scheme. The company also plans to close its processing offices in Birmingham, Bristol, Croy-

don, Leeds, London and Manchester with the compulsory loss of 100 jobs. The work will be transferred to Edinburgh. MSF, the union for skilled office workers, said it was concerned that Scotland could lose a huge number of jobs in financial services. It will be seeking an urgent meeting with Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland.

Meanwhile, Amstrad is to cut 150 jobs in Britain and some staff at its European operations as part of a reorganisation of its unprofitable consumer electronics division.

Alan Sugar, chairman of the group, said: "The market trend in consumer electronics means only lean organisations who concentrate on their core skills will flourish. Where possible, UK staff will be offered suitable alternative employment within the group but substantial redundancies are inevitable."

## TOURIST RATES — BANK BELLS

|                 |                 |                    |                   |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Australia 1.965 | France 7.52     | Italy 2.370        | Singapore 2.12    |
| Austria 15.30   | Germany 2.20    | Malta 0.5425       | South Africa 5.41 |
| Belgium 45.00   | Greece 370.00   | Netherlands 2.4725 | Spain 183.00      |
| Canada 2.05     | Hong Kong 11.65 | New Zealand 2.23   | Sweden 10.57      |
| Cyprus 0.7075   | India 52.81     | Norway 8.65        | Switzerland 1.88  |
| Denmark 6.52    | Ireland 0.6525  | Portugal 228.75    | Turkey 0.47       |
| Finland 6.28    | Israel 4.76     | Saudi Arabia 5.88  | USA 1.4850        |

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel).



Consumers to enjoy biggest rate reductions ever seen in cellular phone industry • Savings of up to 30pc due in March

# Cellnet price war to squash Orange

Nicholas Barnister  
Technology Editor

**T**HE battle for the mobile phone market moved into a new phase yesterday when Cellnet, the market leader with more than 2.3 million customers, announced price cuts aimed at checking the success of Orange in the digital market. Cellnet, 60 per cent owned by British Telecom, said it was planning the largest price reductions seen in the cellular industry — with savings of up to 30 per cent. The new prices, due to come into effect at the beginning of March, bring Cellnet's charges in line with those of Vodafone, its main competitor, which is already in the process of introducing cheaper packages.

Both Cellnet and Vodafone are seeking to close the price gap with Orange, the all-digital operator which has signed up more than 400,000 customers since starting operations in April 1994. Orange, due to be listed on the Stock Exchange in March with an expected valuation of £2.7 billion, has been winning more digital customers in its network area than its larger rivals mainly because it charges less for calls. This success has been achieved even though it has not completed its network, it charges more for its handsets, and it operates the less popular PCN mobile standard. Cellnet's digital services have just under 300,000 customers, while its older analogue services have over 2 million. Digital services are clearer, can be used in many overseas countries, and can-

not be intercepted by eavesdroppers. However, handsets tend to cost more, and call charges are usually higher than analogue ones. Cellnet, which is not changing basic monthly charges for its four services, is offering customers of three of the services a new option to buy a fixed amount of airtime for an extra monthly payment. Customers paying between £2.12 and £12.50 a month, excluding VAT, will get airtime worth between £5.53 and £17.50 a month. It is topping 5p a minute of call charges for its digital service for consumers, leaving rates at 30p a minute for peak calls and 10p for off-peak calls. Peak calls on its digital service for business or heavy loggers are coming down from 25p to 20p a minute, with the off-peak period being extended to include Saturdays.

It is also following the industry trend by introducing per second charging for digital. Howard Ford, Cellnet's managing director, said yesterday's announcement was "bad news for our competitors who assumed they could compete on price alone". Industry sources said that Cellnet and Vodafone, who between them dominate the UK mobile phone industry, want to get more subscribers to switch from analogue to digital in order to free capacity on their allotted radio spectrum. A Cellnet spokesman, who claimed the group still had adequate capacity, admitted that it could replace every analogue subscriber with four digital customers. He added that the group had lobbied the Government for extra spectrum to meet long-term needs.

## BT forces OfTel to back down on redundancy cost

**B**RITISH Telecom has forced Don Cruickshank, the director general of OfTel, to back down from his attempt to prevent competitors having to contribute to the cost of the former state-owned monopoly's massive redundancy programme, writes Nicholas Barnister. Mr Cruickshank said last month BT's rivals should not have to pay part of BT's redundancy costs through

interconnection charges — the money which other operators pay BT for carrying their calls over its network. He also felt that the cost of the BT chairman's office, vacant property, and publicity campaigns to win back customers should not be included in the calculation of interconnect charges. But in his ruling yesterday, Mr Cruickshank said that he had only ruled out a

portion of the redundancy costs from the interconnection calculation. Also excluded were the cost of short-term investments. A OfTel spokesman said that BT had provided a lot more information, and as a result two-thirds of its redundancy costs together with the expense of running the chairman's office had been allowed. He added that BT was entitled to fully allocate these costs under the terms of its licence. Mercury, BT's main UK rival, said that it was shocked by Mr Cruickshank's decision. Peter Howell-Davies, Mercury's chief executive, said: "I'm appalled that OfTel should feel BT deserves special treatment as competition is a fact of life for most operators."

"Indeed, many have used redundancy to improve their efficiency and reduce costs in the face of that competition. Typically, the costs of such activity are borne by the company and its shareholders, not by customers and competitors." He pointed out that BT had admitted in 1992 that its voluntary redundancy programme had been pitched higher than necessary to persuade more people to leave the company. OfTel said that it had disallowed a third of BT's redundancy costs because they were over the figure which the group was contractually obliged to pay. It added that the exclusions, including publicity expenses, would reduce inland conveyance charges by almost 10 per cent.

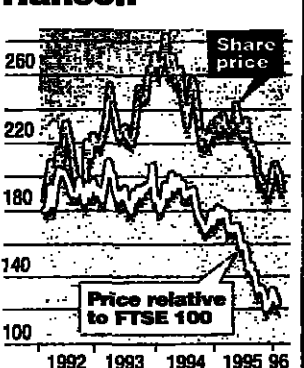
## Hanson pays a high price for past excesses

OUTLOOK/ Ian King on troubles facing the £10bn conglomerate's demerger

**D**RINKERS are only too familiar with the scenario. After a heavy session the night before, the morning after is accompanied by a hangover, which usually takes longer to shake off than the original binge did. It is a sensation being suffered by the noble Lord Hanson. Not 48 hours after announcing that his £11 billion business empire was breaking up, sending the shares racing, City analysts were reaching for the aspirin. They pruned £1 billion from Hanson's market value, prompting an emergency teleconference for bond holders on Friday, and the weekend rumours that the group was planning a £600 million special dividend pay-out.

Although Hanson would only admit yesterday that a special dividend had been discussed, the fact that it is even being considered shows the tremendous problems associated with selling the idea of a demerger to shareholders. Hanson has always been focused on dividends, and, in recent years especially, it has given the impression that it would rather do anything — even cut its cherished contribution to the Conservative Party — than cut the pay-out. While not yet a tried-and-tested formula, special dividends have had their successes in the past. In recent months, several regional electricity companies, including Midlands and Northern, have used the tactic to ward off potential predators. Granada used the special dividend successfully, as part of its £3.9 billion assault on Forte, while other companies flush with cash have pondered the idea before settling on a share buy-back. Hanson is considering a special dividend to appeal to one key group of shareholders in particular — the income funds, who have previously held the stock because of its relatively high yield, and who were said to be fuming at the way the demerger announcement was handled.

### Hanson



only be listed in New York — is excluded. The extra debt imposed by a special dividend would make this harder still. Hanson's attraction in the market has recently been solely due to its high yield, which, even on last night's share price, down 2½p at 182½p, was 7.5 per cent. The City knows Hanson's demerger plans are a dividend cut by the back door, and it does not like it, special dividend or not. What may save the day are hopes of a bidder emerging for one or more of the four new companies, spurring on the shares in the same way Thorn EMI's have rocketed in recent weeks. Failing that, Hanson will have to do what it should, perhaps, have done all along — tough it out.

## Dalgety profits a dog's dinner

Tony May

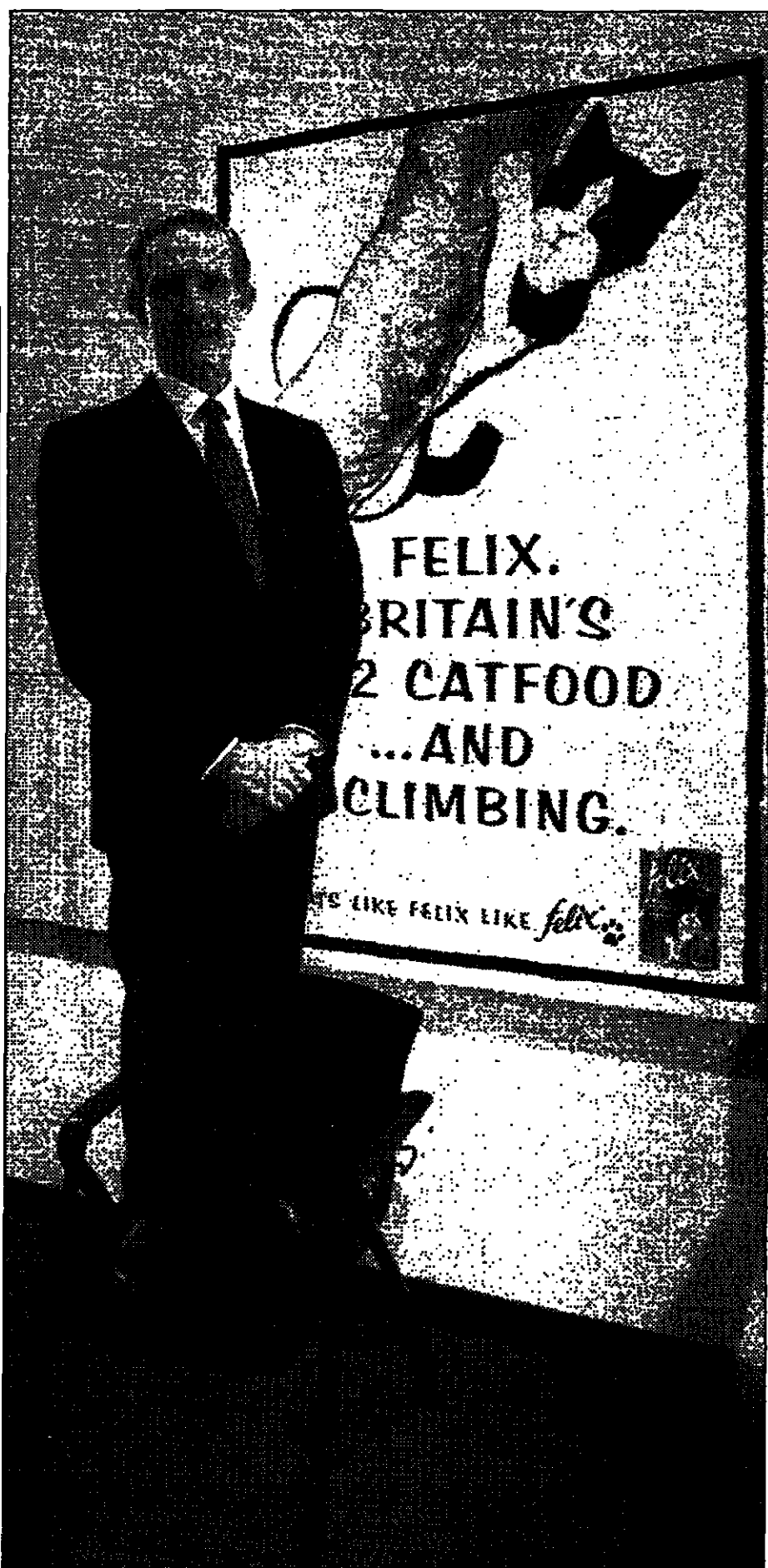
**D**ALGETY'S profits fell by more than a fifth to £47.4 million in the first half of the year as the pet food and agribusiness group struggled to integrate the Felix and Fido pet food brands bought a year ago from Quaker for £442 million.

Chief executive Richard Clothier said a key factor for the downturn was a drop in sales at Spillers, Dalgety's old UK pet food business. Spillers has suffered from a shift in the UK pet food market to especially in dog food, which has seen a stronger-than-expected move towards "chunk" foods, which Quaker already produces, away from the paté-style products which Spillers makes.

This has been hastened by a rise in raw materials costs which particularly affected paté-style brands. Mr Clothier said that unusually high wheat prices — up 10 per cent in December — had cut margins, but the company was already pushing those cost rises through to the consumer. He predicted that Europeans, who mostly feed their pets with food they prepare themselves, will follow the lead of US and British pet owners who increasingly turn to prepared food in cans and bags.

The group made a charge of £30 million for reorganising its pet food business and £10 million for property revaluations, offset by a gain of £82 million from the sale of its consumer foods unit.

In the City, analysts cut their forecasts for full-year profits from about £132 million to about £125 million. Having sold its consumer foods business, Dalgety is now focused on three businesses: pet food, food ingredients and animal feed and pig breeding. In September it sold its Homepride sauces business to Campbell Soup for £58.6 million, and a month later sold its Golden Wonder snacks division for \$54.6 million.



Top cat... Dalgety chief Richard Clothier has seen profits plummets. PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

### News in brief

#### Clinton submits slimline budget

PRESIDENT Clinton yesterday sent a highly abbreviated budget to Congress projecting 2.3 per cent real gross domestic product growth in 1997 and 3.3 per cent in 1998. Instead of the usual 2,000 pages, yesterday's document was a skimpy 30 pages because of the budget deadline. The bare bones budget was almost identical to the offer Mr Clinton put on the table in January. The \$1.64 trillion budget projects the 1997 deficit reaching \$160.6 billion, up slightly from this year's estimated \$154.4 billion. A fuller budget plan will be presented next month. — Mark Tran in New York

#### Bank notes slight rise in cash

THE QUANTITY of cash in circulation grew only slowly last month, damping hopes of an imminent retail recovery which had been fuelled by recent signs that consumer confidence was improving. The Bank of England said yesterday that growth of notes and coin in circulation fell back to 0.3 per cent in January, from 0.5 per cent the previous month. The data, used as a guide to consumer activity, showed the seasonally adjusted annual rate dropping to 5.7 per cent from December's 5.9 per cent. Combined with separate government data also published yesterday, showing housing starts fell in 1995 by 15 per cent to 169,700 against 198,000 in 1994, the money supply figures dented hopes of imminent economic improvement. — Sarah Ryle

#### Kinnock sticks by Iberia

EUROPEAN transport commissioner Neil Kinnock yesterday defended his decision to approve a £440 million state handout to Spanish airline Iberia, saying the move was legally sound. Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, has condemned the decision as countering efforts to establish fair competition in the skies. Mr Kinnock said he hoped Iberia's would be the last big subsidy to a state owned airline. — Keith Harper

#### United cuts bills for elderly

UNITED Utilities, the company formed from the merger of the North-west's regional electricity company Norweb and North West Water, is reducing bills by £10 each for 100,000 pensioners who heat their homes with off-peak electricity. The heating bills reduction, announced yesterday, follows a £5.60 "efficiency rebate" to be paid annually for five years by North West Water. — Maryn Fitzall

#### Germans buy Grace's dialysis

WR Grace, the American conglomerate, yesterday announced it is selling its kidney dialysis business to Germany's Fresenius in a deal worth \$3.2 billion. If the purchase is completed, Fresenius is likely to have sales of \$3.5 billion in 1996 and will be one of the world's largest dialysis companies. — Mark Tran in New York

#### Sears sells shoe stores

SIEFFIELD businessman Stephen Hinchliffe yesterday announced his retail group Facia is buying 134 Saxe and Curless shoe shops from Sears. Sears said the latest restructuring of British Shoe Corporation, which controls its retail chains, would involve 90 redundancies from the Leicester headquarters followed by a maximum 200 further redundancies from the group's distribution business over the next 12 months. — Tony May

#### Farnell seeks bid backing

HOWARD Poulson, chief executive of Yorkshire-based electronic components company Farnell, has embarked on an intensive round of meetings with the company's institutional investors to try to persuade them to back its proposed £1.85 billion takeover of US rival Premier Electronics. The bid is considered audacious by the City because Farnell is much smaller than Premier. Some of Farnell's institutional shareholders have expressed fears that the deal would dilute earnings for many years. — Pauline Springett

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Poppley to tackle

English Open

New Tot favour W

Continental Airlines logo and contact information.



Rugby Union

Popplewell clear to tackle Quins

Robert Armstrong
TWICKENHAM surprised Harlequins yesterday by giving the Irish international prop Nick Popplewell the go-ahead to play against the Newcastle Geoforth in Saturday's rearranged fifth-round Pilkington Cup game.

for Newcastle, because he has been living in Dublin this season. The RFU, however, says its own 120-day quarantine period which he has now served, having registered for Newcastle last October.

Weir who plans to live on Tyneside.
Hallett believes EU employment law would prevent any European union from imposing the 180-day quarantine on a professional player switching clubs between unions.

Minister urged to refine Bosman law with European counterparts

Labour's Tom Pendry will urge the Minister of Sport Iain Spence today to call a conference of European Union sports ministers to establish a common line on the Bosman ruling, writes John Duncan.

Labour MEP for Midlands West, is organising cross-party support in the European Parliament for a compromise interpretation of the Bosman ruling.

The WRU's resolve is likely to be tested by Robert Howley's proposed move from Bridgend to Saracens at the end of this season. The scrum-half made an impressive debut for Wales on Saturday and his departure would be a blow to WRU plans to engage its leading players to develop the game in the principality.

Table Tennis

English Open launches world pro tour

Richard Jago
THIS year's English Open will be the inaugural event of the world's first professional tour, organised by the International Table Tennis Federation and with \$250,000 (£165,000) prize-money for the finals at the end of the year.

It could also become the outstanding open tournament in the world. Its own prize-money of about \$20,000 will be a record for the event, and although this will provide relatively modest rewards compared with the incomes of some leading players, the desire to qualify for the lucrative finals should bring them to the event.

The International Management Group about the promotion and sponsorship of the tour, although it is likely that any sponsorship deal will, for now, cover only the finals. Umbrella sponsorship for the tour - possibly comprising eight tournaments before the finals - will have to wait until next year.



Ready to return... once-troubled Jennifer Capriati 'is happier and much wiser now'

Capriati launches second comeback attempt in Paris

David Irvine
PARIS, where as a 14-year-old in 1990 she became the youngest player to reach the semi-finals of a Grand Slam event, is the setting for Jennifer Capriati's second attempted comeback to the women's tour. Her first, in Philadelphia in November 1994, lasted only one match.

19-year-old American had not played competitively for 14 months. "She says she is now ready physically and mentally after a long preparation in Florida."

man Open and again disappeared from view. At the US Open last September stories of Capriati being "in no fit state to play tennis" were denied by her agent, Barbara Perry of IMG, who said she was both fit and happy.

Athletics
Christie ruled out until the great outdoors

Stephen Blotley
BRITAIN'S Olympic sprint champion Linford Christie finds his indoor season written off virtually before it began. Christie, a late entrant at the national indoor championships in Birmingham last weekend, juddered to an untimely stop in the 50 metres final on Saturday afternoon, a victim of a strained adductor muscle, and yesterday it was announced that he will not compete, as scheduled, in this weekend's Ricoh Tour International or in the Great Britain v France match in Glasgow at the end of the month.

leaved Christie, despite protracted denials, would defend his title in Atlanta. Three athletes who will defend their titles in Atlanta, assuming they are fit, are Peter Whitehead, Richard Nerurkar and Liz McColgan, who were named yesterday for the Olympic marathons. The two men, currently carrying injuries, must show their fitness by competing in a half-marathon by the end of May.

Such was Christie's remarkable recovery after the world championship finals in Gothenburg last summer when, after finishing sixth, he collapsed on the track, that speculation as to his future must remain circumspect. Donovan Bailey, the world champion, has already cast doubts on the true nature of the Briton's injury in Sweden. The Canadian also said he believed there is a professional financial department in the federation, so it's not a position that the old-fashioned secretary would be regarded as necessarily filling. It's more a strategic position, and in one fell swoop that vital link between the athletes and the federation could be made.

Lister gives Parsons backing to high jump on to the board

JOHN LISTER, who is not to seek re-election as the British Athletic Federation's treasurer yesterday threw his weight behind the international high jumper Geoff Parsons as his successor, writes Stephen Blotley. Parsons will stand against Martin Evanson, the Southern Counties treasurer, for the vacant treasurer's post at next month's annual meeting.

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Racing
New Tote conditions favour Warm Spell

Ken Oliver
GARY MOORE is hoping for a warm spell in more ways than one at Newbury on Saturday. The Epsom trainer said "Warm Spell is in good form for the Tote Gold Trophy. I just hope the weather relents."

Tony McCoy was impressed with him at Kempton and said he would ride him again, said Moore. "I would give Fiddwell plenty of respect and they say Frickley has improved since but he would need to. I definitely wouldn't swap Warm Spell for any of them."

inquiry that Livio had been dropped 4lb in error between the two races, the Catterick win came as no surprise. At Livio's trial this afternoon, Tragic Hero (4.20), with the very capable Jim Durkin in the saddle, looks worthy of the nap in the concluding Peach Handicap for amateur riders.

Salter given 21-day ban after drugs charge

DARREN SALTER, a conditional jockey, was charged to Rod Milman's Cullinston stable, yesterday banned 21 days (starting Thursday) after failing a drug test.

Lingfield All-weather Flat card with form

Table with racing results and form guides for Lingfield All-weather Flat card. Includes race numbers, names of horses, jockeys, and times.

64 cards lost

RACING has again been hit by the icy weather, with today's meetings at Carlisle and Warwick, like Newton Abbot yesterday, abandoned because of frost.

Results

Table with racing results for various tracks including Carlisle, Warwick, and Newton Abbot. Lists race numbers, horse names, jockeys, and winners.

Advertisement for Lingfield Racecourse, featuring a logo and contact information for the racecourse.

Visited today for the first time: 2.50 Zuno Flyer; 3.20 Takeshi, Desert Water; 4.20 Canary Falcon.



Soccer

Boro ready for second Brazilian

Ian Ross

THE LURE of Tossello is becoming irresistible to South America's finest. Yesterday, in near-Arctic conditions, the Brazilian international defender Branco arrived at Middlesbrough's Riverside Stadium to discuss the prospect of forging an improbable partnership with his fellow-countryman Juninho.

Although the 31-year-old full-back would not cost a fee, having bought out his contract with Internacional de Brazil, he is believed to be demanding wages of about £20,000 a week.

Juninho is very happy here and he said he would like to come and join him. "We have played together before in the national squad. We are good friends and that is the main reason why I settled on Middlesbrough."

"I wanted to come here because England has one of the best leagues in the world. I had a few offers from other English clubs and also from teams in Japan, Spain and America, but I want to play alongside Juninho."

The news from Newcastle was less encouraging yesterday as the Premiership leaders made no attempt to deny that the proposed signing of the Colombian Faustino Asprilla had collapsed.

Parma said at the weekend that Newcastle had been trying to reduce the £5.7 million fee after it was revealed Asprilla had been injured.

Newcastle's manager Kevin Keegan declined to discuss Asprilla while underlining his determination to bring in more players of quality.

"I want to strengthen things but the problem is finding the right man," he said. "I have always said we could win something with the squad we have already; we are trying to buy for next season, not this one."

The Leeds manager Howard Wilkinson has stressed that Tomas Brodie's stay in West Yorkshire need not be brief and unfruitful.

Dismayed at his failure to win a place even in a side depleted by injuries and suspension at Aston Villa, the Swedish international forward admitted he was considering his future less than three months after his arrival from Parma for £4.5 million.

Brodie's sarcastic declaration that he "wasn't good enough" to line up at Villa Park prompted Wilkinson to say that he was not thinking behind a decision made all the more confusing by the manner of a comprehensive 3-0 defeat.

"All talk of a rift, of a bust-up or a fall-out, is absolute rubbish," said Wilkinson. "The fact is he wasn't selected on Saturday. He has not settled into Premiership football as well as everybody would have liked. And he has not produced the form which we know he is capable of."

Even so, it seems he has convinced the Russian Football Association that Andrei Kanchelskis should be released from international duty to help the FA Cup holders in their fourth-round replay at Park View tomorrow night. Kanchelskis is scheduled to depart for a four-nation tournament in Malta tonight but, after several days of patient negotiation, he will probably take his place at Vale Park.

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Smiling Irish eyes... Mick McCarthy takes over at Lansdowne Road. PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN COGILL

Enter Big Mac in the shadow of Big Jack

Cynthia Bateman in Dublin witnesses a damp start to a new era for the Irish Republic

IT RAINED as it only can in Ireland. Lansdowne Road dripped uninvitingly; the great empty stands were desolate, draughts and eddies whispered Big Jack's name along the terraces. His presence had still there, sure enough; but he is not here.

Into his giant shadow yesterday strode the Republic of Ireland's new manager Mick McCarthy, who to take up his new post has left his job at Millwall with two years on his contract to run. Thus 45 days after Charlton's departure, the Football Association of Ireland's six-man committee has chosen the man the Irish people thought from the beginning was right for the job.

the compliment: "You know the way they do things in the FAI," he said. "But they seem to have done things right this time. I'm glad he's got the job. He'll be good for Ireland."

"People who say Mick will be a copy of me are talking nonsense. He has totally different ideas on the way the game should be played."

McCarthy confirmed: "I will do it my way and hopefully it will be a successful way. If it isn't they will have the doors open on the ferry waiting to send me back" — specifically to his home in Kent and his wife Fiona and three young children.

His way, it is his style at Millwall is followed, and because the younger players he inherited from Charlton play the ball to feet, it is likely to be sophisticated.

"My aim is to qualify for the World Cup in France in 1998. But any of the Republic's last 10 years, expectations are very high. I have the feeling that everything thinks it is cut and dried."

"That's what you have to be able to swallow," he said. "The present Republic players in their mid-thirties — you can put the names to the ages, as their manager I want to talk to them before they read anything in the papers" — will undoubtedly have to go as McCarthy seeks new talent.

He said that if the former Millwall player, Chris Armstrong, would not be jeopardising his club chances by declaring for the Republic because the Bosman ruling has ended the restriction on the number of EU players a club can field, European and domestic competitions.

McCarthy batted the questions backwards and forwards: here a subtle drop-shot, there a swiftly volleyed ace when old enmities were mentioned.

He declared himself excited and animated at the prospect of his job and paid tribute to the effect Charlton's success had had on the Irish domestic game. "When I started playing for the Republic, I could walk down the street and no one recognised me; now look at all of you here."

Once the formal news conference was over, McCarthy, with just a trace of sweat on his brow, disappeared under a mountain of microphones and cameras as the important question such as "Do you like Shredded Wheat?" were asked.

When he emerged, Louis Kilcoyne, the president of the FAI, popped the champagne cork. "You know I'm teetotal, don't you?" McCarthy yawned. The FAI officials looked nervously. McCarthy held up the glass for the photographers and then put down the drink untouched. The same man as Jack Charlton? Think again. But he may prove he is every bit as good.

Blake may get chance for Bolton

NATHAN BLAKE, who has failed to score in seven matches for Bolton since his move from Sheffield United, may get the chance to break his duck at Burnley Park tonight if the FA Cup fourth-round tie against Leeds survives the weather.

Blake may be in for John McGinlay, who is replaced on Saturday at Ewood Park when Bolton's top scorer for the past three seasons limped off with a calf injury.

will ensure that the pitch is playable but snow and ice on the tarring could be a problem. If the game goes ahead Blake may be in for John McGinlay, who is replaced on Saturday at Ewood Park when Bolton's top scorer for the past three seasons limped off with a calf injury.

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What next from out of Africa?

Amid the Nations' Cup euphoria John Perlman in Johannesburg wonders where an African World Cup contender may emerge

BEFORE the start of the 20th African Nations' Cup Issa Hayatou, president of the Confederation of African Football, said it was "only a matter of time before Africa wins the World Cup".

He was echoing the thoughts of many, starting with the former England coach Walter Winterbottom in 1962, who predicted an African country would be world champions before the end of the century. Hayatou was less specific but drew like being more accurate, with only the 1998 World Cup finals to come before the end of the millennium.

It would have been interesting to ask Hayatou which of the four teams playing on the last day of the African Nations' Cup — the final was preceded by the third-place play-off — he thought most likely to fulfil this dream.

Would he opt for South Africa, winners of the tournament had only two players with regular experience in a first division that is hardly bursting with talent.

That at least is a problem Ghana does not have. Despite losing the third-place game 1-0 to Zambia, a Ghanaian team with an average age of around 21 played some wonderful football, spoiled by their finishing. Many of the players are graduates of the team that won the 1981 Under-17 World Cup, all but a few now play in Europe and Ghana won the Under-17 trophy again last year.

There is no doubting the richness of Ghana's promise. But in this tournament their goals of success in the tournament and a boost for the game have been richly realised. But it points to a much deeper problem. South Africa has failed to introduce young talent into the higher levels of the game for some time, with many first division clubs relying heavily on imported players of ordinary ability.

The national under-20 team which was eliminated from the world championships at the first hurdle by lowly Mauritius had only two players with regular experience in a first division that is hardly bursting with talent.

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South Africa has more sporting facilities than the rest of the continent combined, a healthy sporting ego and the added inspiration of a major football trophy won at the first try. But there are some clouds about.

The average age of the team that won the cup is 27. That is not alarming; the short-term goals of success in the tournament and a boost for the game have been richly realised. But it points to a much deeper problem. South Africa has failed to introduce young talent into the higher levels of the game for some time, with many first division clubs relying heavily on imported players of ordinary ability.

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The average age of the team that won the cup is 27. That is not alarming; the short-term goals of success in the tournament and a boost for the game have been richly realised. But it points to a much deeper problem. South Africa has failed to introduce young talent into the higher levels of the game for some time, with many first division clubs relying heavily on imported players of ordinary ability.

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That at least is a problem Ghana does not have. Despite losing the third-place game 1-0 to Zambia, a Ghanaian team with an average age of around 21 played some wonderful football, spoiled by their finishing. Many of the players are graduates of the team that won the 1981 Under-17 World Cup, all but a few now play in Europe and Ghana won the Under-17 trophy again last year.

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SFA delays sign of cross punishment

THE Scottish FA made a pre-emptive strike against an anti-doping yesterday when it deferred a suspension on the Patrick Thistle striker Rod McDonald, writes Patrick Glenn.

McDonald, cautioned by the referee Jim McGilvray at half-time in Saturday's match against Rangers for missing the sign of the cross as he left the field, was given a second yellow card for a foul in the second half and was sent off.

He was due an automatic one-match ban but the offences would also have taken him beyond the disciplinary points limit and ensured a further suspension.

However, the SFA, after seeing a fax from the Thistle's chairman Jim Oliver and reports from the referee and a linesman, put any punishment in abeyance until Monday. The first caution and the ordering-off will probably be quashed.

On the downside, the Thistle defender Steve Pittman has been suspended for eight matches.

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Sport in brief

Werner Parathoner of Italy claimed his first World Cup victory of the season in Garmisch-Partenkirchen yesterday in a super-giant slalom halted three times because of problems on the piste. Parathoner took advantage of a high starting number to beat Luc Alphand of France and Austria's Patrick Wirth.

Yuri Arbachakov of Russia retained his WBC flyweight title by outpointing Raul Jauregui of Mexico in Tokyo.

John Woosnam has climbed to No. 26 in the world rankings on the strength of his back-to-back European Tour victories in the Johnnie Walker Classic in Singapore and the Heineken Classic in Perth.

The Chicago Bulls' 18-game winning streak ended on Sunday when they were beaten 105-99 by the Denver Nuggets.

Only one French team, GAN, led by Britain's Chris Boardman, have been given automatic entry into this year's Tour de France.

Pool skater Yang Yang of China set a world record in the women's speed skating short-track 1,500 metres yesterday, clocking 2min 28.93sec at the Asian Winter Games in Harbin.

Kevin Tamati, who won 22 New Zealand caps and played for Widnes, has been appointed coach of Chorley.

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Sailing

AN Eastbourne syndicate led by a feisty 42-year-old housewife yesterday became the 38th entry for the Whitbread Round the World Race 1997-98. Sussex Challenge will be skippered by Jacky MacGillivray, whose first mate is her husband David.

She claims to have more than half a million miles of cruising and racing to her credit but admitted that the racing was not at the top prize level. Importantly, though, her drive has ensured the financial support of BUPA International, Business Against Drugs, the Eastbourne College of Arts and Technology and a number of local companies and organisations. Most of the budgetary requirement of £24 million is in place.

Mrs MacGillivray described her husband's job on board as "to protect the crew from the skipper". Many of them have been chosen. They are mixed, amateur and in the main, in their early twenties.

The boat is already earmarked for the Ukrainian-built Hetman Schaidachy, which finished seventh in the last race, taking 15 days more than the winner — "unless we have the money to build a new one", the skipper said.

The International Yacht Racing Union has confirmed that it will hold evaluation trials for a "high-performance dinghy" for the Olympics in 2000.

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FA annoyed by hotel 'rip-offs'

A night for a single room during Euro '96; last night one could have stayed there for £70.

The local authorities are belatedly contemplating campsites for supporters — the youth hostel was block-booked by Scandinavians a year ago — but are concerned about security problems.

Some foreign tour operators are encouraging supporters to make day trips to avoid hotel rip-offs, which would have a serious impact on spending by fans in the host cities. "What we are seeking is a football festival that costs nothing but credit on this country," said David Davies, the FA's director of communications.

The problem is that none of the host cities outside London has enough accommodation — Manchester, for example, is expecting 50,000 visitors but the city has only 28,000 beds. Demand for major city-centre hotels has been such that there are said to be few rooms available in the medium and higher price brackets.

Hotellers, however, hit back at the FA last night. "We rearrange our prices as a matter of course," said an executive of Britannia hotels, whose group takes in the host cities of Manchester, Birmingham and London. "That is business. When there is a quiet period it is reflected in our rates; when it is busy, that is too." Britannia's Manchester hotel will charge £140

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Results

Soccer ENGLISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Manchester United v Wimbledon. Football League First Division: All matches postponed.

ALPINE SKIING: MEN'S WORLD CUP (Garmisch-Partenkirchen): Super-giant slalom 1, W Parathoner (17); 2, P Wirth (16); 3, P Wirth (16); 4, P Wirth (16); 5, P Wirth (16); 6, P Wirth (16); 7, P Wirth (16); 8, P Wirth (16); 9, P Wirth (16); 10, P Wirth (16); 11, P Wirth (16); 12, P Wirth (16); 13, P Wirth (16); 14, P Wirth (16); 15, P Wirth (16); 16, P Wirth (16); 17, P Wirth (16); 18, P Wirth (16); 19, P Wirth (16); 20, P Wirth (16); 21, P Wirth (16); 22, P Wirth (16); 23, P Wirth (16); 24, P Wirth (16); 25, P Wirth (16); 26, P Wirth (16); 27, P Wirth (16); 28, P Wirth (16); 29, P Wirth (16); 30, P Wirth (16); 31, P Wirth (16); 32, P Wirth (16); 33, P Wirth (16); 34, P Wirth (16); 35, P Wirth (16); 36, P Wirth (16); 37, P Wirth (16); 38, P Wirth (16); 39, P Wirth (16); 40, P Wirth (16); 41, P Wirth (16); 42, P Wirth (16); 43, P Wirth (16); 44, P Wirth (16); 45, P Wirth (16); 46, P Wirth (16); 47, P Wirth (16); 48, P Wirth (16); 49, P Wirth (16); 50, P Wirth (16); 51, P Wirth (16); 52, P Wirth (16); 53, P Wirth (16); 54, P Wirth (16); 55, P Wirth (16); 56, P Wirth (16); 57, P Wirth (16); 58, P Wirth (16); 59, P Wirth (16); 60, P Wirth (16); 61, P Wirth (16); 62, P Wirth (16); 63, P Wirth (16); 64, P Wirth (16); 65, P Wirth (16); 66, P Wirth (16); 67, P Wirth (16); 68, P Wirth (16); 69, P Wirth (16); 70, P Wirth (16); 71, P Wirth (16); 72, P Wirth (16); 73, P Wirth (16); 74, P Wirth (16); 75, P Wirth (16); 76, P Wirth (16); 77, P Wirth (16); 78, P Wirth (16); 79, P Wirth (16); 80, P Wirth (16); 81, P Wirth (16); 82, P Wirth (16); 83, P Wirth (16); 84, P Wirth (16); 85, P Wirth (16); 86, P Wirth (16); 87, P Wirth (16); 88, P Wirth (16); 89, P Wirth (16); 90, P Wirth (16); 91, P Wirth (16); 92, P Wirth (16); 93, P Wirth (16); 94, P Wirth (16); 95, P Wirth (16); 96, P Wirth (16); 97, P Wirth (16); 98, P Wirth (16); 99, P Wirth (16); 100, P Wirth (16); 101, P Wirth (16); 102, P Wirth (16); 103, P Wirth (16); 104, P Wirth (16); 105, P Wirth (16); 106, P Wirth (16); 107, P Wirth (16); 108, P Wirth (16); 109, P Wirth (16); 110, P Wirth (16); 111, P Wirth (16); 112, P Wirth (16); 113, P Wirth (16); 114, P Wirth (16); 115, P Wirth (16); 116, P Wirth (16); 117, P Wirth (16); 118, P Wirth (16); 119, P Wirth (16); 120, P Wirth (16); 121, P Wirth (16); 122, P Wirth (16); 123, P Wirth (16); 124, P Wirth (16); 125, P Wirth (16); 126, P Wirth (16); 127, P Wirth (16); 128, P Wirth (16); 129, P Wirth (16); 130, P Wirth (16); 131, P Wirth (16); 132, P Wirth (16); 133, P Wirth (16); 134, P Wirth (16); 135, P Wirth (16); 136, P Wirth (16); 137, P Wirth (16); 138, P Wirth (16); 139, P Wirth (16); 140, P Wirth (16); 141, P Wirth (16); 142, P Wirth (16); 143, P Wirth (16); 144, P Wirth (16); 145, P Wirth (16); 146, P Wirth (16); 147, P Wirth (16); 148, P Wirth (16); 149, P Wirth (16); 150, P Wirth (16); 151, P Wirth (16); 152, P Wirth (16); 153, P Wirth (16); 154, P Wirth (16); 155, P Wirth (16); 156, P Wirth (16); 157, P Wirth (16); 158, P Wirth (16); 159, P Wirth (16); 160, P Wirth (16); 161, P Wirth (16); 162, P Wirth (16); 163, P Wirth (16); 164, P Wirth (16); 165, P Wirth (16); 166, P Wirth (16); 167, P Wirth (16); 168, P Wirth (16); 169, P Wirth (16); 170, P Wirth (16); 171, P Wirth (16); 172, P Wirth (16); 173, P Wirth (16); 174, P Wirth (16); 175, P Wirth (16); 176, P Wirth (16); 177, P Wirth (16); 178, P Wirth (16); 179, P Wirth (16); 180, P Wirth (16); 181, P Wirth (16); 182, P Wirth (16); 183, P Wirth (16); 184, P Wirth (



# Motor Racing High-speed return by Hakkinen

**Alan Henry**

**M**IKKA HAKKINEN picked up the threads of his career yesterday with an impressive first outing at the wheel of a Formula One car since he sustained severe head injuries in a high-speed crash during qualifying for last year's Australian Grand Prix.

The 27-year-old Finn was driving last year's McLaren-Mercedes in a test which the team had planned to keep as private as possible, but he posted a fastest time within a second of the world champion Michael Schumacher's best in the Ferrari at the Paul Ricard circuit in southern France over the weekend.

"Mika's testing himself rather than the car," said a McLaren spokesman. "He has been training hard and we wanted him to have his first run since the accident without any pressure."

A week of pre-season car launches was dominated by the unveiling of Benetton's new Renault-engined B196. In contrast to Hakkinen's low-key return, Benetton's launch in the Sicilian resort of Taormina was conducted in the best tradition of F1 high glitz.

After a spectacular start with Jean Alesi and Gerhard Berger driving two of last year's Benetton-Renaults through the main Corso Umberto, there was an official presentation of last year's Constructors' Championship trophy to Benetton by Max Mosley, president of the governing body Fia.

The action then switched to the 2,000-year-old Teatro Antico, where Alesi, French by nationality but Sicilian by birth, unveiled the new Benetton B196 in the company of celebrities including the French film star Gerard Depardieu and Italian actress Mara Venner.

Alesi and Berger both know, however, that they face a huge challenge in filling the void at Benetton left by Schumacher's defection to Ferrari.

The team's technical director Ross Brawn describes the new car as "evolutionary but with significantly improved aerodynamics" and holds out considerable optimism that the team will sustain their winning ways.

The proof of the pudding, of course, will come during the next few weeks of testing at Estoril before the first race of the season, the Australian Grand Prix at Melbourne's new Albert Park circuit on March 10.

Hakkinen meanwhile will be moving on to Estoril for Sunday's launch of the all-new McLaren-Mercedes MP4/11, on which David Coulthard's hopes for 1996 will also be pinned.

The Scot, who left Williams at the end of last season, will have to wait only until the following day to see what his old team have come up with. The new Williams FW18 for Damon Hill and Jacques Villeneuve is due to break cover in the same pit lane next Monday.



Formula One glitz... the Sicilian resort of Taormina is the setting as Benetton unveil the new Renault-engined B196

# Boxing Bruno and Benn in pills probe

**Jack Massarik**

**E**YES popped at the British Boxing Board of Control's offices in London yesterday when officials read press reports from Tenerife that Frank Bruno and Nigel Benn were taking 150 vitamin pills a day.

Last night inquiries were being made in the Canaries, where Britain's two WBC champions are training at a warm-weather camp for their world-title defences next month. Bruno against Mike Tyson, Benn against Sugar Boy Malonga.

Ingestion of vitamins on this scale, as Professor Thomas Sanders, head of nutrition and diet at King's College, London, pointed out yesterday, "could cause problems".

John Morris, the Board's secretary, fears that the fighters are following the dictum to "keep taking the tablets" too seriously.

"I've spoken to Frank Warren, the promoter of Bruno and Benn, and had a chat with Frank Bruno's wife Laura, and we just want to know the details," he said last night.

"If you read a story that says Britain's top boxers could be putting themselves at risk, we obviously want to know how and why."

The Board's chief medical officer Adrian Whiteson said: "If they've got a balanced diet — and there's no reason to believe they haven't — their nutrition is better than most people's. I don't believe any vitamins they take would have any benefit to them other than a psychological one."

The Board was "not wielding a big stick", stressed Morris. "We are not going to hassle our boxers — we are very proud of them. These are our two WBC world champions — but we want chapter and verse medically about what they are doing and how they are doing it."

"I want to be sure they are not doing anything that puts themselves at risk. Our own medical panel have initiated the inquiries. We obviously need to know. Some of this may be exaggerated, but once we find out the levels of vitamins that are being taken we can get experts to assess whether they are safe."

# Rugby League Weather threat to Cumbria ties

**John Huxley**

**T**HE four outstanding Silk Cup challenge ties are continuing to give the Rugby Football League a problem. Both are to be played in Cumbria, where severe weather is putting them at risk.

The Workington v Widnes match, which should have been played today, was further postponed for 24 hours after a heavy snowfall. And there will be a pitch inspection at the Recreation Grounds this morning to see if tonight's Whitehaven v Halifax tie can go ahead.

Whitehaven's chairman Derrick Mossop said: "Unless there is a dramatic change overnight I cannot see the match being played. Roads into the town are blocked and we haven't been able to reach the stadium to see what conditions are like."

Yesterday the RFL was considering its options. The most likely outcome seems to be that in the event of further postponements the clubs will be given until Sunday to complete the ties, after which the League will consider taking the games to grounds that have under-soil heating.

Bill Madine, secretary of Whitehaven, said yesterday: "We would be very reluctant to give up home advantage."

Meanwhile, Warrington's chairman Peter Higham has criticised Leeds and Wigan for forging links with rugby union clubs. The Cheshire club have barred their players from pursuing such connections and have made it clear they will not allow union clubs to use their Wilderspool stadium.

Higham said: "We've just finished the 100-year war and now we are bending over backwards to help rugby union. We should be concentrating on promoting Super League and not throwing down the welcome mat to union. I can't see the gain for league in Wigan entering the Midlands Sevens or playing Bath in challenge matches."

"Some league people won't be resting easy, the way we've gone cap in hand to union. There is a real danger of union gaining the upper hand at league grounds they share, because of the money in their game."

The chairman said Warrington had rejected invitations from Welsh rugby union clubs to play them at league.

St Helens' 68-16 Challenge Cup fourth-round win at Newford has cost them dear. Their loose forward Dean Busby has been ruled out for a month with a torn medial ligament in his knee. However, he should be available for the semi-finals if the Merseyside club progress that far.

# Why British engineering is the pits' pick

**Alan Henry on a remarkable success story of high technology in the sterling area**

**B**ESIDES costing millions and causing their creators almost as many sleepless nights, the 1996 Benetton, McLaren and Williams cars now being unveiled have one quite remarkable thing in common: they are all products of British precision engineering, from drawing board to workshop floor.

Likewise, Michael Schumacher's allegiance may have transferred from Benetton to Ferrari but the world champion will continue to rely on British engineering design as he attempts a hat-trick of Formula One titles.

Benetton and Ferrari are Italian-owned and controlled, but both teams have moved their design and research headquarters to southern England to take full advantage of Britain's unique motor-racing infrastructure.

It may surprise people who have seen the nation's volume car manufacturers picked off by foreign competitors, but when it comes to racing cars the world still likes to buy British. So much so that Luca di Montezemolo, the president of Ferrari, refers to the corridor around south-west London and Surrey as "the Silicon Valley of international motor racing".

Six of the 11 teams entered for next year's F1 world championship are based here — seven if one counts Ferrari, who built the cars they design in Guildford back at company headquarters in Maranello. So are all three world

ally championship contenders: Ford and Mitsubishi come over for British skills, and Subaru have their rally cars produced for them by the Banbury engineers Pro Drive.

The wider motor-sport industry — everything from components to services — is a major export earner. It employs some 50,000 full-time staff and another 100,000 part-timers and in the financial year to last April generated profits of £750 million on foreign earnings of £1.3 billion.

Britain has been F1 racing's technical home since the late Fifties, when Cooper and Lotus popularised the rear-engine chassis configuration now taken for granted.

Their success created a network of small and highly specialised sub-contractors who soon earned worldwide respect. Since then a virtuous circle has set in, with success attracting more business and more engineering talent to produce yet more success.

Ford and Cosworth and Tyrrell near Woking to Ferrari's R & D base near Guildford and on to Williams at Grove near Didcot, Benetton at Chipping Norton, Jordan at Silverstone and Arrows at Milton Keynes, there is a shared commitment to excellence and a continuous cross-fertilisation of ideas.

The major F1 teams operate with budgets of around £25 million, derived from multinational corporate sponsors. Most of that money is directed to the UK to fund technical development, factory oper-

## The Zoom Zone

How the world's top racing teams ring London

| Key | Place           | Company   |
|-----|-----------------|-----------|
| 1   | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 2   | Banbury         | Pro Drive |
| 3   | Silverstone     | Jordan    |
| 4   | Woking          | Cosworth  |
| 5   | Woking          | Tyrrell   |
| 6   | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 7   | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 8   | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 9   | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 10  | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 11  | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 12  | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 13  | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 14  | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 15  | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |
| 16  | Chipping Norton | Benetton  |

# Ice Hockey Rinks of gold for the lawyers

**Vic Hatchelder**

**A**NYONE encouraged by the game's growth must also be concerned at its growing pains. The all-time attendance record was beaten by the 12,386-strong crowd at the Nynex Arena for Manchester Storm's 4-2 win over Bracknell on Sunday. But incidents elsewhere promise to maintain the sport as a lucrative field for members of the legal profession.

"I've a desk full of legal matters. Every day seems to revolve around a call to our solicitor now," the British Ice Hockey Association secretary David Pickles said yesterday. "Five years ago I didn't even know who he was; we just used to get a calendar at Christmas. Now he is highly

involved in running the sport."

One of the latest items on that desk is the dispute between Telford Tigers and the arena management at Blackburn before Sunday night's Division One match. Telford's Russ Plant was refused entry and prevented from playing in a game the visitors lost 9-7.

Plant, a product of Telford's youth development programme, had moved to Blackburn last season but returned to the Shropshire club last week. With the sides unable to agree a fee, the BIHA was asked to arbitrate but Telford were given permission to use him pending the outcome.

Now Tigers are demanding to be awarded the points or have the game replayed at no cost to themselves.

The next case pending concerns the London-born Canadian-raised Roger Hunt, who while playing for Murreyfield Racers at Bracknell on February 22 1992 was involved in an incident in which a home player was seriously injured.

Hunt was detained by Thames Valley Police and charged with causing grievous bodily harm, but he left the country after the court hearing was twice postponed.

The BIHA's disciplinary chairman Frank Dempster was quoted at the time as saying that Hunt and the then Racers coach Leo Koopmans had been placed "under a lifetime ban from participating in British ice hockey". Yet on Saturday Hunt returned in Murreyfield Royals' 15-2 home defeat by Swindon Wildcats, with Dempster denying any knowledge of a "lifetime ban".

He claimed it was only a "period of indefinite suspension" and added that after receiving a request from Murreyfield for the situation to be reviewed he had given permission for Hunt to return after "consulting three members of the BIHA council".

Dempster also said he had been assured by the club that the player had not been charged. But a Thames Valley police spokesman said yesterday: "We did investigate proceedings at the time and the case is still not closed."

Fife Flyers' use of their newly signed Canadian Frank Evans in the defeats at home to Sheffield (4-3) and away at the Durham Wasps (9-6) is also "under review". The BIHA had ordered Fife not to play him pending receipt of his international clearance.

# Basketball Byrd continues to prey on the league that rejected his Palace

**Robert Pryce**

**ALTON BYRD**, the Albanian host of a Radio 5 show, Crystal Palace's general manager and part owner, takes up his other role tonight: the bespeckered avenger.

Palace, the team the Budweiser League rejected last year, have already ejected two Bud League teams from the National Cup. For the first leg of the semi-final at the National Sports Centre tonight the league will be represented by its champions, the Sheffield Sharks.

"This is our chance," Byrd said yesterday, "to continue to show people that we belong in the top league." Indeed, the point has already been made. Palace field a team that includes five internationals, including Byrd himself. They are unbeaten in domestic competition since December 10 1994.

The reservations raised by the Bud League last summer have largely been laid to rest. Palace have attracted commercial and local authority interest, sponsorship and healthy enough crowds; for their 80-75 win over the Leopards in the quarter-finals the attendance was just under 2,000.

Palace will apply to the Bud League again this year, but Byrd will leave the presentation of their case to his fellow directors. "I couldn't take another year," he said, "of satisfying a set of criteria that are seemingly unsatisfiable."

# Snooker Some shaker from Morgan

**Clive Everton**

**D**ARREN MORGAN edged past Peter Ebdon 6-5 with a respoited black yesterday to record his first victory in four visits to the Benson and Hedges Masters at the Wembley Conference Centre.

His victory war-dance, accompanied by a handshake that almost yanked his opponent's arm out of its socket, was even more extravagant than Ebdon's last year when he beat Stephen Hendry from two down with three to play.

"I've always had a go at him [Ebdon] in the past for doing that, but I just couldn't help it," said Morgan. "It was very unprofessional and very immature," said Ebdon.

Morgan, the only member of the world's top eight never to have won a major title, was taken to the sudden-death extra black when the 11th frame ended in a tie.

Trailing 2-4, he had fought back to 5-4 before a break of 96 (12 reds, 12 blacks) brought Ebdon level at 5-5. In the deciding frame Morgan missed a match-ball hug he would ordinarily pot and had to watch Ebdon clear the three remaining balls to tie.

Ebdon was first to attempt the tie-break black but it was the Welsh left-hander who sank it to earn a place in the quarter-finals.

Andy Hicks, a world and UK semi-finalist last year, earlier made a striking Wembley debut. He compiled breaks of 67, 102, 63, 125 and 103 in a 5-2 win over David Roe.

# Hockey Tough tie for Loughtonians

**Fat Rowley**

**T**HE strength of the teams left in the EA Cup was bound to produce a tight draw, and two quarter-finals that would have made excellent finals — Guildford v Reading and Old Loughtonians v Southgate — have come out of the hat.

Loughtonians, who defend their indoor title at Crystal Palace on Friday, have their fourth successive home draw in the outdoor competition, but Southgate are the most successful cup side. Currently leaders of the National League, they ended Loughtonians' unbeaten record in November with a 2-1 win.

Unlike Loughtonians, East Grinstead's run of home ties has been broken. They are away to Havant, the 1990 winners.

The other quarter-final sees the league champions Teddington at home to Canterbury, who are in the last eight for the first time. Of the survivors, these are the only sides never to have won a national competition.

The teams in all four quarter-finals have already met in the league this winter, all at the reverse venues. Guildford drew 2-2 at Reading, East Grinstead beat Havant 4-1 and Canterbury gained their first win over Teddington, 2-0.

Draws: Guildford v Reading, Havant v East Grinstead; Old Loughtonians v Southgate; Teddington v Canterbury. (To be played March 15.)

in the Jack

SFA delays sign of cross punishment

Football Forecast



Christie abandons the indoor season, page 13  
Popplewell cleared to face Quins, page 13

McCarthy steps into Big Jack's shoes, page 14  
Formula One parades the new cars, page 15

# SportsGuardian

## WORLD CUP CLOSE TO CHAOS AS ORGANISERS REFUSE TO BYPASS COLOMBO

David Hopps on fresh pressure on Sri Lanka to allow matches to be moved from the capital and the shadow of the bomber

# Now West Indies want out

**WEST INDIES** joined forces with Australia last night in imploring the World Cup organisers to reschedule their group matches outside Sri Lanka in the wake of last week's terrorist bomb blast in Colombo.

Although West Indies did not quite follow Australia's lead by expressly refusing to play in Sri Lanka, the tone of their statement implied that refusal was inevitable if a switch was not granted.

Pilcom, the joint hosts' organising committee, had steadfastly dismissed Australia's request, its secretary Jagmohan Dalmiya insisting: "Pilcom has decided that the matches in Sri Lanka will be played as scheduled."

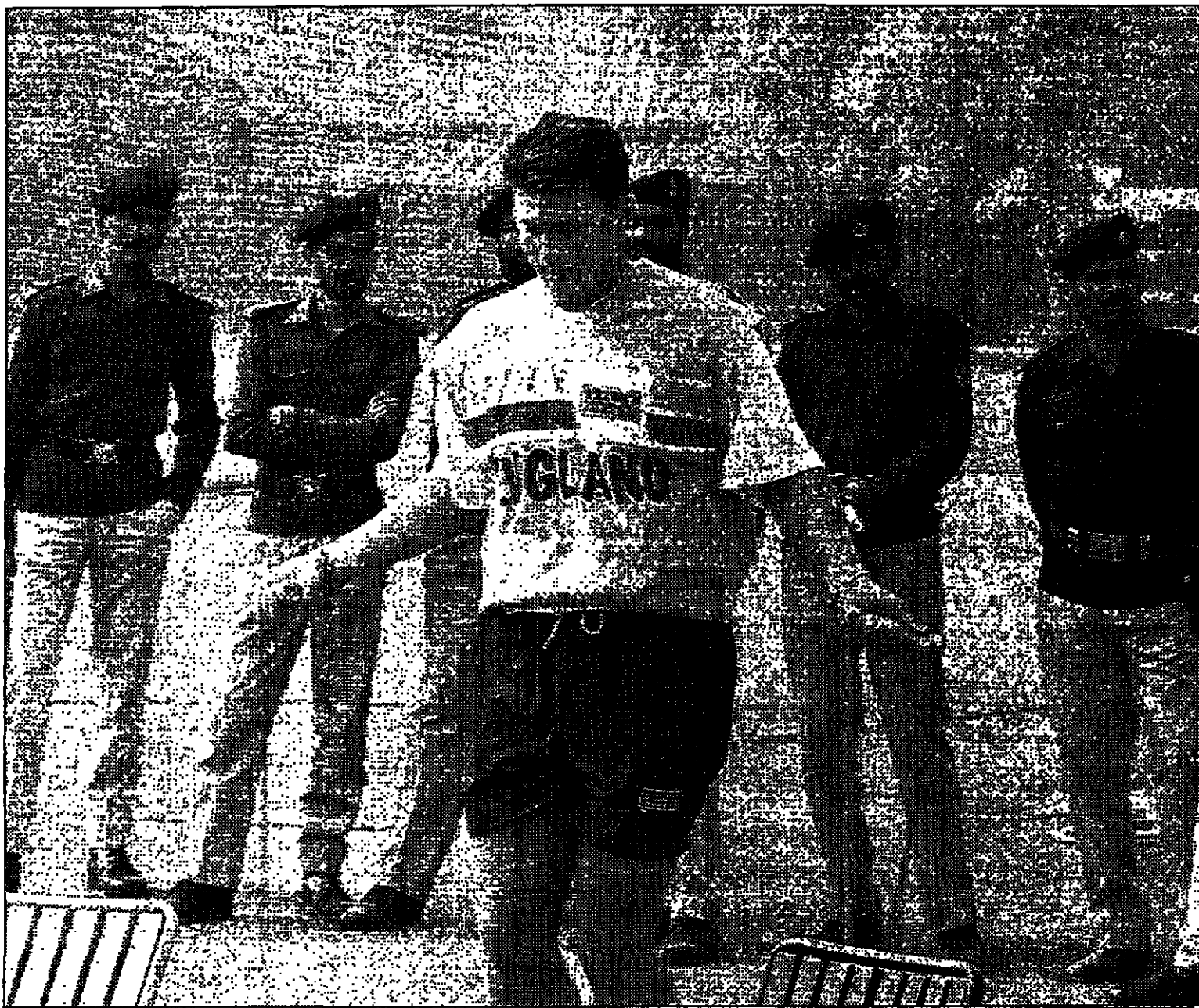
Australia's captain Mark Taylor, who spoke in Sydney yesterday of "a genuine concern of life-threatening injury", played down the risk of disqualification. Indeed that is highly improbable, Pilcom's response suggesting only mounting confusion. "There is nothing in the playing conditions about this," Dalmiya said. "It is totally unprecedented."

The organisers will have awoken today to the further jolt of the West Indian announcement, but with less than a week before Sunday's opening ceremony in Calcutta it would require formidable diplomatic efforts to persuade them to change their stance.

Whatever the merits of the argument, the willingness of cricket's authorities to invest decisions of such magnitude in a 12-strong organising committee, comprising representatives from Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka, rather than invest the ICC itself with overall powers has again been exposed as folly.

Peter Short, president of the West Indies Board of Control, released a statement saying: "We are greatly appreciative of the security measures being taken by the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka, with the backing of the country's president and security forces, to try to ensure the safety of the West Indies team."

"However... the board has reluctantly come to the conclusion that for the players' safety and peace of mind, which is paramount, it has requested Pilcom to reschedule the Sri Lanka v West Indies match on February 25 outside Sri Lanka."



Bowler takes guard... the England seamer Darren Gough skips rope at practice in Lahore yesterday as Pakistan security forces look on

"The board is aware of the tremendous dislocation that this decision will cause and consequent disappointment to the Sri Lankan people. However, this decision has been taken in the best interests of West Indies and world cricket."

Though Leicestershire called off their pre-season tour to Sri Lanka yesterday after Foreign Office advice, Zimbabwe and Kenya have both indicated a qualified willingness to play there, although they may reconsider after this West Indian plea.

Kenya's match is scheduled for the hill-country town of Kandy, and Jimmy Rayana, secretary of Kenya's national association, stated: "We shall play in Sri Lanka provided there is reasonable security. Kenya are playing outside Colombo where there has been no immediate threat yet."

Any prospect of Sri Lanka winning four of their five group matches by virtue of forfeits, leaving them with only one outstanding group match, against India in Delhi, before their automatic qualification for the quarter-finals, would be an untenable position which even Pilcom could not easily ignore.

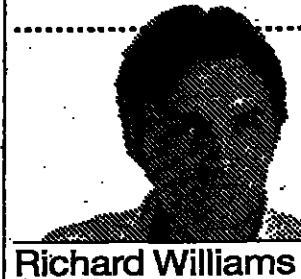
But the organisers could not agree to jettison Sri Lanka's matches without considerable repercussions, foremost of which would be Sri Lanka's likely withdrawal from the World Cup and an immediate schism among the Test nations.

Pakistan's representatives are only too well aware that fixtures in the strife-torn cities of Karachi and Peshawar — each hosting England matches — will take place amid the same heavy security being offered by the Sri Lankans.

Meanwhile, a solution looked in sight yesterday, to the long-running dispute between India's state-run network Doordarshan and WorldTel, the American company which bought the World Cup television rights.

According to reports from the High Court in New Delhi, Doordarshan has accepted a WorldTel offer under which WorldTel matches played in India can be broadcast to local audiences, even though Doordarshan has not paid further funds into court as WorldTel had been demanding.

## Asprilla? No certain cure for headache



Richard Williams

I CAN'T say for sure whether the supporters of Newcastle United had a close shave over the non-transfer of Faustino Asprilla, as the tabloids — with their tales of coke barons and porn queens — seem to have been suggesting. What I do know is that I feel sorry for them, which is not the most usual reaction to a team nine points clear in the Premiership.

Their fans have a coveted manager on a 10-year contract, an enthusiastic and constructive chairman, a majestically rebuilt stadium and a star-studded squad of players producing the sort of football that reminds cynics of why they first fell in love with the game. Set all that against the apparent failure to secure the signature of a forward who couldn't manage a goal in a crucial World Cup match against the United States 18 months ago, and you might ask exactly what there is to feel sorry for.

But the Asprilla affair will have reinforced a lesson Newcastle's supporters may have been in danger of forgetting: that life is not composed solely of a knife-edge Beardley pass, a mazy Girola dribble and a thunderous roar as Ferdinand rises at the far post.

The whole business of the knee X-ray and the disagreement over the player's value may be a game of bluff and counterbluff at the end of which Kevin Keegan will be writing Asprilla's name on a Newcastle team-sheet. Somehow I doubt it. If you watched the TV news footage of the Colombian's brief visit to St James' Park the other day and paid attention to the body language, you could have come to only one conclusion: that however much money he was being offered, Asprilla just didn't fancy the idea.

with a plane to catch. He accepted the pats, but did not smile. He signed scraps of paper, but did not look the supplicants in the eye. Had I been a Geordie, I would not have renewed my season ticket in the expectation of seeing him in the black and white.

Every football fan has a similar tale buried somewhere in his or her secret heart, the memory of the transfer that went wrong — the one that didn't go through, or that left you spending the next 10 years wishing it had.

A few feet from me in this office are the Spurs supporter who remembers the arrival of the Fulham centre-back John Lacey as a signal of the club's diminished ambition, the Luton follower to whom the acquisition of Steve Williams from Arsenal represented a symbol of deluded dreams, the Arsenal fan who uttered the name of Peter Marinello with a sad shake of the head, and the Evertonian to whom the arrival of Gary Lineker at the moment of a title-winning team began to disintegrate.

Those of us destined to follow the fortunes of Nottingham Forest still think about how the arrival of Jim Baxter, the former Scottish genius bought by the chairman without the manager's knowledge, helped destroy a lovely side almost 30 years ago.

Baxter scored with a stunning long-range volley in his first home game and then took his team mates on a tour of the city's bars lasting several months. ("Bad team," Baxter said of Forest recently. They were indeed, after he had got among them.)

A COUPLE of years later Brian Clough announced the signing to Derby County — the hated rivals — of Forest's sole remaining jewel, the winger Ian Storey-Moore, and paraded him in front of County's crowd during the half-time interval at the Baseball Ground. Realising what they had almost done, the Forest committee withdrew from the deal and sold him to Manchester United instead.

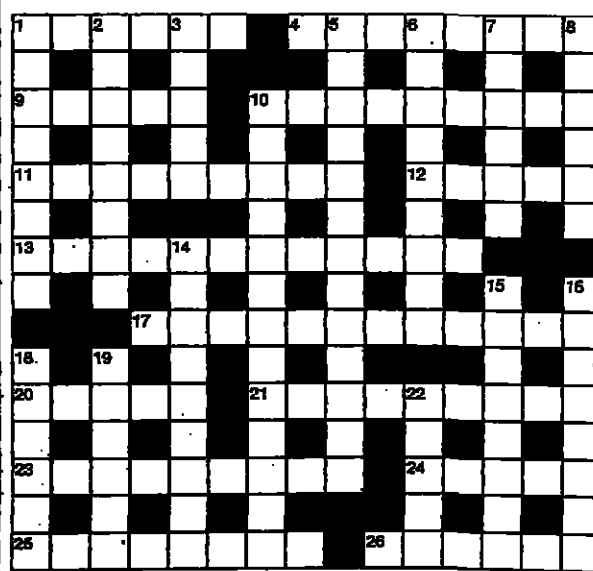
When Clough walked into the City Ground a few years later and began the adventure that ended with Forest's name alongside those of Real Madrid and AC Milan on the European Cup, one or two of us had to swallow hard to forget his part in that humiliation. The short, unhappy saga of Faustino Asprilla is unlikely to leave such a scar, but it is a reminder to Newcastle that, as Ron Greenwood once informed Glenn Hoddle, disappointment is part of football.

## Guardian top of the naps table

CHRIS HAWKINS napped Tempering (7-1) at Southwell yesterday, sending the Guardian to the top of the Sporting Life naps table with a profit of £25.70. *Racing, page 13*

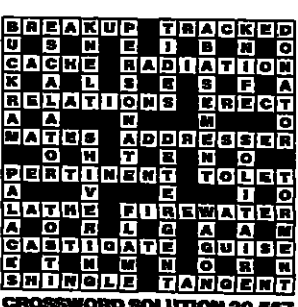
## Guardian Crossword No 20,568

Set by Gordius



- Across**
- Screw turning red to green (6)
  - Forgetting nothing white on errand (6)
  - Member taken round among the lost (5)
  - Mischance may be applied mathematically (9)
  - Firm ran mean business in Ireland (9)
  - Having caught rinky fish, do even better (5)
  - Leo's Bavarian version is equally bold (5,2,1,4)
  - Composed a sonnet to brag about fast food (5,2,5)
  - Die for a drink (5)
  - Media prominence for punishment awarded by master... (9)
  - ... about whom we infer Cavalier treatment (6)
  - Saw to prior inspection (6)
  - The fringe are well advised not to be straightforward (8)

- Down**
- They should be prepared to raise current using copper to British standard (4,4)
  - People who flourish in a manor — or in a caravan? (8)
  - Lavant from Egypt to Israel opening new relationships (6)
  - Mad Charlie who upsets the forces of law and order... (7,5)
  - ... like a cop — gets a bashing for others' (9)
  - ... stupidity — putting one officer into unprofessional work (6)
  - Crill turns up for a drink — it's refused (2,4)
  - Running buffer? (5,2,6)
  - Kohl gets a bit of a laugh in opening house endlessly (3,6)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,567

- Principal supporter this month with article in another month (6)
- Instrument for the ear with too refined a range (9)
- Capital lacks one in the south-east; they're thin on the ground (6)
- Presumably said without glory (6)
- Fruit French paper is short of (5)

### Solution tomorrow

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**Sebastian Faulks**

**G2 page 8**

End of peer  
New Labour Es



Inside

سكس من الالبر